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ABSTRACT

This final report describes the activities of the Reinventing Schools Research Project, a project that investigated how the inclusion of students with severe and other disabilities merges with larger efforts of educators, administrators, and parents to restructure and reform schools and how to influence the direction of that merger. The project conducted case studies of an elementary and middle school in a rural community to document how school personnel blend together the reform agendas for both general and special education, and validated a set of procedures for designing curriculum/teaching, ensuring student learning outcomes, and fostering student memberships for maximally diverse groups of learners, including learners with severe disabilities. The project findings suggest that in order to enlarge the concept of inclusion, as well as encourage durable change in the core of educational practice, schools need to (1) shift from a focus on teaching to a focus on learning; (2) shift from a reliance on individual teacher practice to group practices; and (3) shift from an effort to "deliver service" to one of "providing learner supports". Attachments include sample student, educator, and parent surveys and selected articles on inclusion. (Contains 53 references.) (CR)

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REINVENTING SCHOOLS RESEARCH PROJECT:

Collaborative Research Project on the Merger of General and Special Education School Reform

CFDA 84.086D

FINAL REPORT – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Table of Contents

Abstract..2

Purpose of the Project: Reinventing Schools 3

Rationale for RSR
Description of RSR

Project Design: Two Strands of Participatory Action Research 6

Continuing Professional Development and Practitioner Action Research
Collaborative Research Agreements with Schools

Project Findings: Three Action Arenas for Achieving Durable Change..........9

From a focus on teaching to a focus on learning
From individual to group practice
From "delivering service" to "providing learner supports"

Project Impact..16

Further Information 24

Assurances..25

References..26

Attachments

FINAL REPORT

Reinventing Schools Research Project: A Collaborative Research Project On The Merger Of General And Special Education School Reforms

Abstract

The Reinventing Schools Research Project attempted to investigate how the inclusion of students with severe and other disabilities merges with larger efforts of educators, administrators, and parents to restructure and reform schools, and how to influence the directions of that merger. The Project began with the assumption that successful school inclusion of students with disabilities must be a fully integrated part of a larger effort to reform local schools. Indeed, for students with the most severe disabilities to become fully participating members of their neighborhood schools, those schools must do more than simply create some isolated and sporadic opportunities for physically integrated activities. General education and special education must merge their agendas for reform in a shared effort to restructure curriculum, teaching, school organization, and community involvement to allow for teachers and learners to find success. In short, special education and general education, local districts and universities must join in a partnership to reinvent our schools.

The Reinventing Schools Research Project (RSRP) was designed to contribute to the achievement of reinvented schools through two research strands, each targeting a different level of the change effort:

> **Strand 1: Multi-Year School Case Studies.** This study of two schools -- one elementary, and one middle school in a rural community, documents how school personnel blend together the reform agendas of both general and special education. The study (1) identifies the supports and conditions conducive to achieving both inclusion and broader school reform, (2) the roles of personnel and how those roles change over time, and (3) the strategies and tools used by the schools to accomplish change.
>
> **Strand 2: Teacher Curriculum Studies**. This strand will validate a set of procedures for designing curriculum/teaching, ensuring student learning outcomes, and fostering student membership for maximally diverse groups of learners, including learners with severe disabilities. Developed in collaboration with both general and special educators already engaged in merging general and special education reforms in curriculum and teaching, the *Individually Tailored Education System* includes components for (1) curriculum design, (2) teaching design, (3) ongoing recording and reporting of student accomplishments and outcomes, and (4) observation and decision systems for facilitating student membership and a sense of community. Nine teachers will participate as co-researchers in the implementation and evaluation of these curriculum/teaching/membership tools.

The Reinventing Schools Research Project involved three primary objectives related to (1) conducting the multi-year school case studies, (2) conducting the teacher curriculum studies, and (3) improving existing products and generating new ones which contain both validated tools and research findings. The RSR Project embeded these three objectives within an overall interpretivist research design that included both qualitative and quantitative data and methods.

Purpose of Project

The Reinventing Schools Research Project (RSR) attempted to investigate how the inclusion of students with severe and other disabilities merges with larger efforts of educators, administrators, and parents to restructure and reform schools, and how to influence the directions of that merger. The Project began with the assumption that successful school inclusion of students with disabilities must be a fully integrated part of a larger effort to reform schools. The overall purpose of the RSR Project was to identify and fully describe the school structures and conditions necessary for effectively merging general and special education reform agendas, and to validate a set of heuristic tools that practitioners can use to guide their curriculum and teaching practices within the changing structures of schools.

Rationale for RSR

For more than two decades special educators in various places of the globe have been pursuing reforms in the design and delivery of special education services and supports. (Dalmau, Hatton & Spurway, 1991; Fullan, 1991; Fullwood, 1990; Gartner & Lipsky, 1987; O'Hanlon 1995). We have, or have had, *mainstreaming, integration, reverse mainstreaming, inclusion, inclusive schooling, inclusive schools*, and *schools for all*. Certainly these various slogans have meant different things in different countries at different times, and different things over time in single countries. Some initiatives have relied upon civil rights discourse to argue against separate, segregated or variously differentiated forms of schooling. Other reforms have focused more on how to incorporate specially designed, technically different, but needed teaching practices into general education settings and activities. Some reforms emphasized the needs of students with relatively mild, but troublesome, learning differences; others emphasized the needs of students with significant, even quite severe and multiple disabilities.

Despite these differences in meaning and focus a common vision of what these variously named reforms might mean is definitely emerging. In different ways, some countries have reached the conclusion that people with disabilities have a natural and rightful place in our societies. Schools, as one part of that society, should mirror this broader commitment. Of course, it is the resultant discussions, dilemmas, challenges, and questions that have occupied educators ever since as they have tried to understand not just what such a commitment might mean, but how to make it happen.

After years of research and effort pursuing a greater understanding of this commitment to inclusion, there is now increasing certainty among a growing number of educators that inclusive reforms in special education must be pursued in terms of the general education restructuring and improvement (Ferguson, 1995; Berres, Ferguson, Knoblock & Woods, 1996; National Association of State Boards of Education, 1990; Pearman, Huang, Barnhart, & Mellblom, 1992; Sailor & Skrtic, 1995; Skrtic, 1995; Tetler, 1995). Indeed, some have argued that unless this merging of effort occurs, special education reforms will only achieve partial success at best and may even end up reinforcing and maintaining the very assumptions and practices that the reforms seek to change in the first place.

The question of what needs to change in schools seems much larger than inclusion, special educators, or students with disabilities. It is about what schooling should be and could accomplish. As Eliot Eisner has put it, the question is "What really counts in schools?" (Eisner, 1991). Answering Eisner's question in the day to day life of schooling involves consideration of much more than students with disabilities and special educators.

For their part, and after a decade of renewed activity, general educators, too, are realizing that the efforts of renewal and reform that seemed adequate to resolve the educational problems of the past will simply not suffice this time. Doing better and more efficient schooling work (renewal) or changing existing procedures, rules, and requirements to accommodate new circumstances (reform) will not quiet the need, or calls for changes as we approach the next millennium. Instead, educators now argue, schools must begin to engage in the activities that will change the "fundamental assumptions, practices and relationships, both with the organization, and between the organization and the outside world, in ways that lead to improved student learning outcomes" (Asuto, Clark, Read, McGree, and de Koven Pelton Fernancez., 1994; Conley, 1991, p. 15; Elmore, 1996). Since many of these fundamental assumptions now in need of change helped to create the very separateness special education reforms seek to diminish, it is just such fundamental changes that might realize the vision of inclusion.

Yet in a recent review Cohen found "little evidence of direct and powerful links between policy and practice" (1995, p.11). Schools continue to struggle with an increasing diversity of students who challenge the common curriculum and ability-grouping practices long dominant throughout the system. At the same time, advancements in theories and practices of teaching and learning are leading to new focus on students' understanding and use of their learning rather than recall of facts or isolated skills. Even more challenging, students must demonstrate use or performance of their learning. Since those uses and performances might vary according to students' particular abilities, interests, and life purposes, how then do teachers respond to simultaneous calls for a single higher standard of achievement? In the face of such conflicting messages and challenges, school professionals are also facing a rapid erosion of financial support and public respect. Not only are they being asked to "do more with less," but they are blamed as incompetent for not accomplishing such an impossible task.

Issues and Actions

The RSR Project explored these complex dynamics in 25 schools in 3 districts over a three year period. The findings of RSR suggest that if fundamental change is to occur in teaching/learning for teachers and students, and the dual systems of special and general education merged into a unified system of all students, we must resolve three issues:

Issue 1: How does special education become an integral part of public schooling? Experience and research have well elaborated the complexity of this issue. One of the most straightforward involves how to deliver the specialty and support services long associated with special education. Another involves whether or not such an integration requires specialized personnel or personnel with various specialties. And perhaps most challenging: what to do with the current special educator complement who may not have the capacity to shift to new roles easily?

Issue 2: How will higher education, various research organizations, educational labs, institutes, and other research organizations in both general and special education need to change? In the same way that relationships in school will need to change, our relationships in higher education and research will also need to realign. Can we learn from each other or are the contingencies in such organizations incompatible with the very kind of cross pollination we are asking of school teachers? Are we asking the right questions, or do we need to refocus our efforts into arenas that are more directly responsive to the "definition of the situation" of people in schools?

Issue 3: How should families, individual community members, community agencies, and businesses participate in large scale school change? Many of our reforms have been slowed down, sometimes thwarted, by the families of the students our reforms seek to serve. It seems there is much room for communication and involvement with the families and communities in which we expect our students to use their learning. We might also consider the ways in which parents and other community members might contribute both knowledge and resources to school agendas.

The RSR project grew out of a desire to better understand these issues. This report summarizes what our research team has learned after three years trying to investigate these three issues in collaboration with schools in three rural districts in Oregon. Our involvements with the schools in the three districts have varied in time as well as tasks. Yet taken together, our efforts are documenting the ways in which schools are working in three arenas to support the inclusion of students with disabilities along with the gradual restructuring that could result in the kinds of fundamental changes that will lead to better learning for students and teachers alike.

Description of RSR

Our collaborations have focused primarily on assisting the schools and districts (1) to develop the comprehensive information systems necessary for school improvement planning and action, (2) to access needed professional development, and (3) to support individual and collective action research efforts. We have reported the details of our efforts and results elsewhere, though both our results and writing continue (Ferguson, 1995a; Ferguson, 1995b; Ferguson, 1996a; Ferguson, 1996b; Ferguson & Meyer, 1996; Ferguson & Ralph, 1996; Ferguson, Ralph & Katul, in review). Here we briefly summarize our activities across the schools and districts, and then offer some summary reflections about what we learned from these schools about the need to shift (1) from a focus on teaching to a focus on learning, (2) from a reliance on individual teacher practice to group practice, and (3) from an effort to "deliver service" to one of "providing learner supports". It is this attention to "core educational practices" (Elmore, 1996) or "central variables" (Conley, 1991) that is required both for large scale general education reform and successful integration of the special education reform of inclusion.

Legislation begun in 1987 and culminating in Oregon's *Educational Act for the 21st Century* (HB 3565) put Oregon in the forefront of the national calls for comprehensive school reform and restructuring with goals that meet and exceed those of *Goals 2000.* Hallmarks of the Act included an emphasis on identifying high outcome-based standards for all students with grade-level benchmarks, performance-based assessments, common curricular aims, emphasis on essential learning skills, use of developmentally appropriate practices and mixed age grouping at the elementary level and a new focus on career development and practice leading to certificates of initial and advanced mastery at the secondary level.

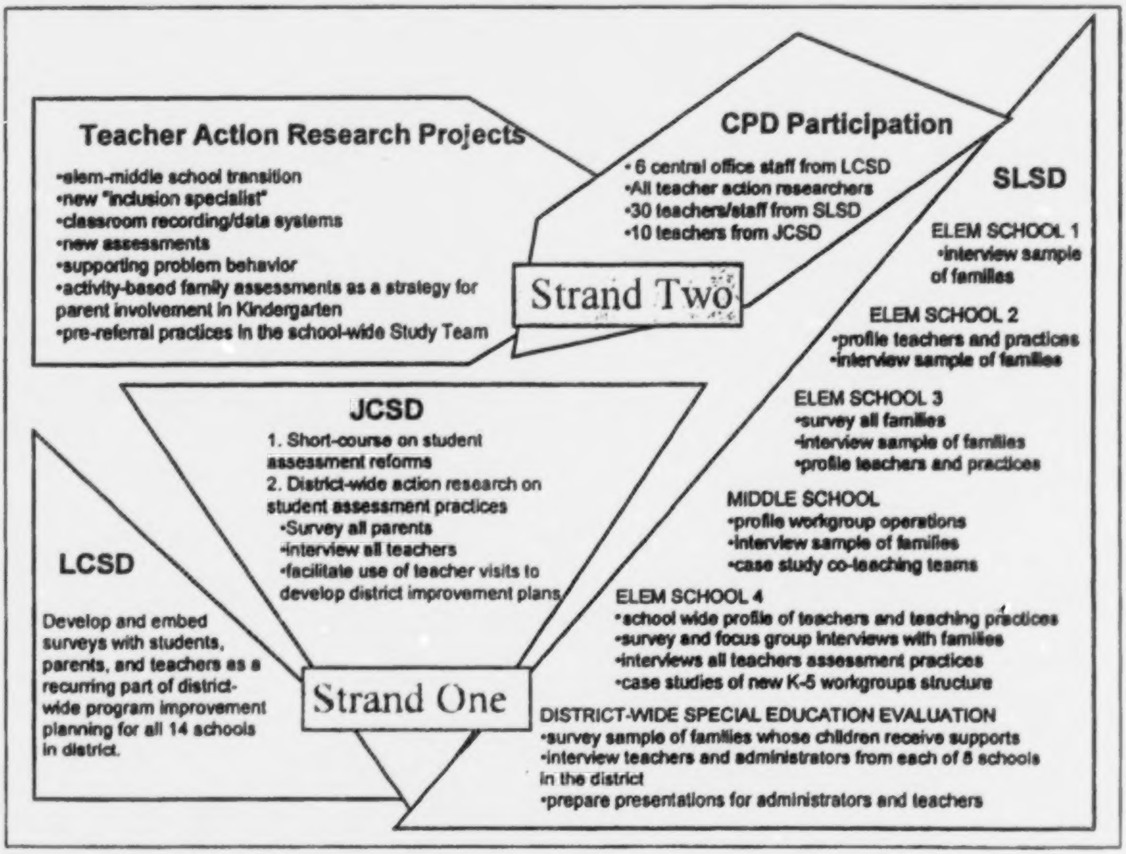
A simultaneous statewide initiative called "supported education" called for local school districts to move toward a flexible and creative array of supportive education services to provide a free appropriate public education to students with disabilities in general education classrooms. This initiative was one of five major goals for special education since 1989. Currently, virtually all of the local and regional education service districts have responded by restructuring services to students with disabilities so that they are more fully included in the learning life of the school community. In fact, according to 1995 data, 72% of students with disabilities in Oregon are receiving their schooling in general education classrooms compared to 63% in 1991.

These dual agendas set the stage for our collaborative research agreements with schools and districts to help them blend these initiatives together. The specific opportunity afforded by the reforms was the requirement that all districts, and thereby schools, develop individual school profiles upon which to base school improvement plans which would serve as templates for implementation of the various aspects of the comprehensive reforms. A strongly recommended strategy for implementing reforms was to pilot ideas using action research projects and then broadly disseminate and implement successful ideas.

Project Design

The *Reinventing Schools Research Project* (Ferguson, D., Ferguson, P., Rivers & Droege, 1994) targeted two strands of participatory research activity, each targeting a different level of the change effort. The first focused on developing collaborative research agreements with a small number of schools. Our thinking was that we could contribute to their school-wide profiling and action research agendas and in so doing would learn a good deal about embedding

Figure 1: Collaborative Research & Professional Development Activities with Three Rural Districts


Teacher Action Research Projects
•elem-middle school transition
•new "inclusion specialist"
•classroom recording/data systems
•new assessments
•supporting problem behavior
•activity-based family assessments as a strategy for parent involvement in Kindergarten
•pre-referral practices in the school-wide Study Team
CPD Participation
• 6 central office staff from LCSD
•All teacher action researchers
•30 teachers/staff from SLSD
•10 teachers from JCSD
Strand Two
SLSD
ELEM SCHOOL 1
•interview sample of families
ELEM SCHOOL 2
•profile teachers and practices
•interview sample of families
ELEM SCHOOL 3
•survey all families
•interview sample of families
•profile teachers and practices
MIDDLE SCHOOL
•profile workgroup operations
•interview sample of families
•case study co-teaching teams
ELEM SCHOOL 4
•school wide profile of teachers and teaching practices
•survey and focus group interviews with families
•interviews all teachers assessment practices
•case studies of new K-5 workgroups structure
DISTRICT-WIDE SPECIAL EDUCATION EVALUATION
•survey sample of families whose children receive supports
•interview teachers and administrators from each of 8 schools in the district
•prepare presentations for administrators and teachers
JCSD
1. Short-course on student assessment reforms
2. District-wide action research on student assessment practices
•Survey all parents
•interview all teachers
•facilitate use of teacher visits to develop district improvement plans
LCSD
Develop and embed surveys with students, parents, and teachers as a recurring part of district-wide program improvement planning for all 14 schools in district.
Strand One

inclusion goals into broader school restructuring goals. Our second strand focused on supporting the efforts of individual teachers through both continuing professional development and practitioner action research. Figure 1 illustrates our activities across both strands, by our evolving collaborative strategies, which we then briefly summarize.

Strategies for Working with Schools

Strategy I: Continuing Professional Development

Well-educated and supported teachers have always been the backbone of school reform. Yet all too often our previous educational reforms have underinvested in teachers (Cremin, 1965; Darling-Hammond, 1995). Achieving teacher effectiveness, whether in general or special education, ultimately requires attention to more than the technical and content mastery so familiar to both fields of education. There must also be a broadened definition of teacher roles that includes multi-theoretical fluency, creative problem-finding and -solving, reflective and inquiry-based teaching, self-management, and ongoing professional growth (Baumgart & Ferguson, 1991; Goodlad, 1990; Grimmet & Erickson, 1988; Schon, 1983; Sarason, 1986). The dynamic nature of this process suggested to us that the traditional division of teacher education into preservice and inservice components is no longer viable if it ever was (Ferguson, Dalmau, Droege, Boles, Zitek, 1994a).

In response we developed a set of professional development alternatives grounded in a set of principles (Ferguson, D., & Ferguson, P., 1992; Ferguson, et al., 1994a). The most comprehensive offering has been a four course professional development sequence that occurs one night a week through the academic year with a two-week intensive course in June. During the period since Fall 1992 we have had roughly 250 teachers and other school staff participate in this course sequence, around 35-40 of these participants have been from the districts with which we have also pursued collaborative research. An important component of our professional development efforts has been to achieve as much diversity as possible in our participants. In the last sequence offered during 1996-97, for example, we had 8 graduate students preparing for initial licensure in special education, 13 general educators, 15 special educators, 6 substitute teachers, 4 educational assistants, 4 administrators or district consultants, 2 adult service professionals, and 2 family/school board members.

In two of these districts we have also provided shorter courses on student assessment reforms. These short sources involved 5 session of 2 hours each spread over a ten week period. At the end of each short course, participants peer-taught the faculty in their own buildings usually in a 2-3 session format spread over 3-5 weeks.

Strategy *II: School Information Systems*

As we began negotiating research agreements, it was clear to us that the effort to work as a whole school was a new challenge for most schools. Many individual teachers were experimenting with various aspects of reforms, all related to whole school change, but few efforts were really *school* reforms – collective efforts. We also noticed that school improvement planning tended to rely on a relatively small amount of information about student achievement using standardized measures that satisfied few school personnel. Moreover, teacher interests and preferences seemed to be largely ignored. In response we sought to help schools develop and gradually institutionalize more comprehensive information systems upon which to base their improvement planning.

Specifically, we helped schools develop and use qualitative-style surveys of parents, teachers, and students that were user friendly and generated rich information that could be summarized relatively easily with our help. We are continuing to embed the data analysis and summary systems in districts so as to minimize the need for outside collaborators for this step. We also engaged in more in-depth interviewing and observation within some schools to gather more information about practices and preferences of school faculty with regard to a variety of reform aspects. As part of this more in-depth profiling, we experimented with novel graphic presentation formats in order to improve the accessibility and heuristic nature of our research "reports" (Ferguson, 1996a). In one school district, we completed a district-wide assessment of the status of special education supports and services through a collaborative research agreement to help with the district's strategy planning in their school improvement efforts. Of special interest to the district was how many special education students were receiving instruction in general education classrooms, and how many of these students were participating in state assessments. Our future plans include embedding such more in-depth practices within schools through the use of community collaborators and partner schools that could provide such data collection and summary functions for each other.

During the course of the project, we worked on a contractual basis with two additional school districts. One district asked us to help them design, administer and analyze surveys for students, teachers and parents in their district. In the second district, we assisted in the development, administration and analysis of surveys with parents, and also did a series of interviews with and presentations for district staff. These two contracts were outgrowths of the project-related work we were doing in the other districts.

Not all our efforts are finished. We are still working within and across schools to embed these broader systems of data collection in continuous improvement processes. The point here is more that this strategy seems a necessary component of systemic change efforts and one often overlooked by schools and collaborators alike. For us, the information generated from these efforts contributed directly to the content in our professional development offerings, thus tying those efforts directly to empirically based school needs.

Strategy III: Individual and Collective Action Research

Our final strategy for collaborating with the school improvement efforts in three targeted districts involved working with individual teachers to use an action research approach to implementing reforms in their own practice. The teachers involved have all also participated in the year long professional development course sequence, and in most cases, their action research efforts targeted using some idea, tool, or approach gleaned from that professional development. In this way the content of the professional development efforts were validated through the individual teacher action research projects.

In JCSD we supported a district-wide action research effort to better inform all teachers about innovative teaching and student assessment practice. First we interviewed teachers and prepared a summary presentation of what they told us. Second, we surveyed parents' perspectives regarding both assessment practices and school services more generally. Finally we provided a process for teachers to document and analyze information collected during teacher visits to other schools in preparation for more specific recommendations for district resources allocation to support district improvement targets.

Project Findings

Unfortunately, and certainly unintentionally, much of the professional and popular literature about inclusion has focused attention on "all students", which is fast becoming special education advocacy code for trying to ensure the rights of still excluded learners. Yet for the values embedded in the notion of inclusion to ever be obtained in our schools, we must not be misdirected to focus just on all **students**. Rather, we must enlarge our perspective to **all** teachers, **all** curricular reforms, **all** teaching reforms, **all** support personnel, **all** policies, **all** strategies for student assessment, and so on.

Our experiences with the schools, districts, and teachers involved in our research and professional development efforts suggest that achieving this larger perspective, as well as durable change in the core of educational practice, will involve activity in three action arenas. Indeed, nearly all the specific work in our collaborative research agreements has focused within one or more of these arenas where action and attention is shifting (1) from a focus on teaching to a focus on learning, (2) from a reliance on individual teacher practice to group practice, and (3) from an effort to "deliver service" to one of "providing learner supports".

From a Focus on Teaching to a Focus on Learning

Historically we have cared most about what students *know*. Teachers must "cover" content, making sure that as many students as possible remember it all. We've assured ourselves that our schools are doing well through the scores students achieve on tests which measure their acquisition of this content – at least until the test is over. Much teacher work involved introducing new material, giving students various opportunities to practice remembering that content, and assuring all of us of their success by frequently testing memory and mastery in preparation for the official achievement assessments.

The confluence of demands upon schools as we move toward the largely unknown challenges of the next century is slowly shifting educators' focus away from what gets taught to what gets learned, and used. Elementary and secondary teachers in all the schools we've been working are experimenting with new curricular and teaching approaches that emphasize students' mastery not just of facts and content, but also of essential thinking skills like problem-solving, analysis, collaboration, and experimentation. Rather than measuring what students have remembered about what we've taught, educators are as interested in how students can demonstrate that they understand and can use whatever they've learned in school and in their various pursuits outside of school.

Many promising curricular and instructional approaches have emerged in general education. Some teachers, for example, design learning unique to each student through the logic of multiple intelligences and learning styles as well as various forms of direct skill teaching. The technology of brain imaging and related neurological research is supporting a wide range of long-used teaching practice and encouraging the development of new ones (e.g., Sylwester, 1995). Learning is increasingly active, requiring students not just to listen, but to learn by doing. Teachers are turning to projects, exhibitions, portfolios, along with other kinds of curriculum-based information and measurement strategies, to learn what students have learned and can do with their learning (e.g., Darling-Hammond, Ancess, & Falk, 1995; Fogarty, 1995; Harmin, 1994; Valencia, Hiebert & Afflerbach, 1994). The increasing availability of the Internet offers students an opportunity to access many forms of primary data in ways that are flexible, non-linear, and responsive to individual student interests and approaches to learning.

The values and logic behind these (and other) approaches can be extremely powerful when extended to all kinds of diverse learners, including special education labeled students. Nevertheless, this is also an area of schooling where the "cross-pollination" between general and special educators has yet to occur very thoroughly. For example, special educators have used activity-based assessment, individually-tailored curriculum, and locally-referenced, community-based instruction for some time now. They created these approaches precisely because they were concerned to use time well for students who might find learning difficult and labor intensive. Directly teaching students in ways that emphasized how they used their learning not only saved valuable time, but for some students was the only way for them to really appreciate their need to learn. For their part, general educators working with innovative designs of curriculum and teaching stretch their application to only part of the diverse students in schools today. Special education students generally fall outside the pale of such innovations in the minds of most general educators (and special educators familiar with them) even when the ideas and techniques would actually enrich and enable the learning of students with disabilities.

A major stumbling block in the synthesis of approaches that have emerged from both general and special education has been the documentation and reporting of student learning, both because standard grading and achievement measurement practices uncomfortably fit the new curriculum strategies, as well as because annually-written IEP goals and objectives rarely reflect or document all students actually learn in general education contexts.

Standards? Or standardization?

There is great confusion among teachers about the role of *higher, national, standards* for learning and the incorporation of diverse learning agendas and accomplishments (Gagnon, 1995; McLaughlin, 1995; Oregon Department of Education, 1996; United States Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, 1996). Does "standard" mean standardization in the sense of every student accomplishing exactly the same thing to the same picture of mastery, performance or other measurement? If so, how can any standard accommodate diverse students – especially students with disabilities? If the call for higher national standards means that children really excel – push themselves to do, know, understand just a little more than they thought they could – then how can we compare the achievement of high standards from one student to the next? Never mind, from one school, one district, one state to the next.

Our work with schools suggests that the entire standards discussion is confusing the requirements of program evaluation – *i.e. how well are our schools helping students collectively achieve our articulated standards of learning accomplishment?* – with teacher, student, and parent needs for individual student evaluation – *how is Sarah accomplishing our articulated standards of learning accomplishment? And how does that make sense for her?* Within any group of students, learning accomplishment for some proportion of the group will not necessarily look or be exactly the same as for others in the group. In fact, it would be very surprising if there weren't several different patterns of accomplishment in any group of students.

Finding a way to legitimate that some students in any group can accomplish a "standard" in different ways is at the heart of the standards dilemma. If "accomplishment" can mean different things for different students – certainly a logical outcome of the individually tailored curriculum and teaching practices being encouraged – then the various student accomplishments are difficult to "add up" in any straightforward way. Yet adding up accomplishments against a single defined standard is the essential requirement of program assessment. If everyone is achieving the standards in different ways, how can we know how well our schools are doing collectively?

This dilemma is possible to resolve if the requirements of program assessment are separated from the requirements of student assessment. Interestingly, parents interviewed and surveyed across one district and several other schools in our projects have indicated that the most informative ways for them to learn about their child's learning is through parent-teacher conferences, personal contact with teachers and other school personnel and seeing their children use their learning in their day-to-day lives. Reports, grades, and testing follow, in order of importance and usefulness. Others (e.g., Shepard & Bliem, 1995) investigating parent's preferences for information are also finding that traditional measures are viewed as less informative than some of the emerging performance-based assessments that focus more on individual student growth than acquisition of some standard.

It seems to us that every student and parent should receive individual feedback about how well the student is learning, how much growth she has accomplished during some period of time, and how his or her accomplishments compare to the national or community standard established for our students as a group. However, discretion must be possible in letting any individual student know how he or she is compared to others. There is no safety in numbers when your own individual achievement is compared. Teachers and parents should have the discretion to filter the comparative message for individual students in ways that encourage and enable interest and effort rather than discourage and disable it. Without interest and effort, learning is shallowly compulsory and soon divorced from use and pursuit.

At the same time, all students' various accomplishments can be summarized in individually anonymous ways to answer the question of how any particular school is achieving whatever the relevant agreed-upon standard for the students is collectively. In this way, the needs of program assessment and comparison can be met, while leaving the revelations of any particular student's accomplishment in the hands of teachers and parents – surely the best suited to decide. Those students within any group who do not achieve to some collective benchmark might have very good reasons for not doing so while still achieving the more general standard of excellent achievement in a particular area of focus, whether a common curriculum goal, an essential skill, or a learning outcome that emphasizes integration and use of learning in novel ways and situations. The interpretation of the meaning of accomplishment for individual students should rest with those most intimate with the student's learning. An accomplishment rate of 60-80% for any group of students on any collective benchmark would likely tell a school that they are teaching everyone well, and that 20-40% of their students are accomplishing the benchmark in unique ways (Reynolds, Zetlin & Wang, 1993). As in all good program assessment, the appropriateness of the collective data is best judged and used by those closest to the operation of the program. It is the teachers, staff and families that can best determine how the range of results reflects the students with whom they work or whether the collective results should encourage revision of curriculum and teaching practices.

Like changes in curriculum, this shift in focus on student learning and accomplishments will also require restructured teacher planning, new assessment strategies, and less reliance on proscribed curricula. But achieving such changes requires working in two additional arenas.

From Individual to Group Practice

Our current system has created teachers with different knowledge and information that is differently legitimated. General educators sometimes **know** some important things about the learners with disabilities integrated into their classrooms, but their status as "general" educators makes that knowledge automatically suspect and illegitimate in the face of the "official" knowledge possessed by special educators whose labels matched the student's. Even though general educators often spend more time observing and interacting with labeled students integrated in their classrooms, their presumed proper role and responsibility is to accept and implement the special educator's expertise as the system's approved specialist in teaching and learning for students with labels. As Seymour Sarason (1990) sees the situation,

> *School personnel are graduates of our colleges and universities. It is there that they learn there are at least two types of human beings, and if you choose to work with one of them you render yourself legally and conceptually incompetent to work with others (p. 258).*

Our research demonstrates that these assumptions do not hold up in practice, but more importantly, they can easily get in the way of effective learning for students with disabilities (Ferguson, 1996b; Ferguson & Meyer, 1996; Ferguson & Ferguson, 1992; Ferguson, Ralph, & Katul, in review, Ferguson, Ralph, Katul & Cameron, 1997). The nearly hundred year history of sorting and separating both students and teachers has resulted in very little common ground. General and special educators know a few of the same things about schools, teaching, and learning, but most of the knowledge and skills they rely upon to fulfill their professional responsibilities seem so unique – even mysterious – that sometimes they must feel as if they are barely in the same profession. Legitimating one teacher's knowledge over another is an artifact of our history that is just as insupportable as creating the separations in the first place. It seems clear to me that rethinking our approach to inclusion as but one dimension of a broader general education restructuring must have as one of its goals to increase the common ground of knowledge and skills between general and special educators.

Having said that, let me hasten to add that I am not arguing for **all** educators to become "generalists" or "Super Teachers" who are presumed to possess **all** the skills and information needed to serve the learning of **all** students. I think it very unlikely that anyone could possibly achieve such mastery and competence. Rather, instead of assigning only one teacher to a classroom of 20 or more learners, or to a content area with instructional responsibility for 150-250 students, groups of teachers be collectively responsible for groups of diverse learners. Only through group practice will educators be able to combine their talents and information and work together to meet the demands of student diversity in ways that retain the benefits and overcome the limits of past practice.

These groups of teachers can bring to the task both a common store of knowledge and skills, but also different areas of specialty. In order to achieve a shift from individual to group teaching practice, we must build upon the current collaboration initiatives among educational professionals in two ways. If collaboration means anything at all, surely it means that two or more people create an outcome for a student that no one of them could have created alone. Group practice creates just such an ongoing, dynamic context, helping educators with varying abilities to contribute to the kind of synergy necessary for effective collaboration.

Replace restrictive assignments with shared assignments

Current teacher licensure practices tend to be restrictive, limiting the students an educator can teach to specific categories. Of course, some of these categories are broader than others, ranging from specific disabilities ("LD" or "MR" certifications for learning disabilities and mental retardation respectively) to "levels" of students ("mild", "severe") to disability types and particular ages (secondary severe, or elementary LD). One key feature of mixed-ability group teaching practice, particularly as we await changes in certification requirements to reflect the restructuring of schools, is that teachers share working with all children and youth as part of a team, regardless of their formal preparation or the labels on their certification. This step seems critical because it is one of the most efficient ways for teachers more narrowly educated to "cross-pollinate", quickly increasing the size of their common ground. More importantly, shared assignments create the contexts in which genuine collaboration can occur.

We have encountered a number of schools pursuing group practice through shared assignments. A common first step among special educators is to assign various special education support staff within a building – resource room teacher, speech/language specialist, Title 1 teacher, previous self-contained classroom teacher – to a smaller number of classrooms where they can be responsible for students with all the labels they had each separately served across a much larger number of classrooms. While the previous resource room teacher may feel unprepared to assist the student with significant multiple disabilities, learning how to gather that information from colleagues with different specialties is a "step on the way" to more complete group practice with general educators.

Other schools we know are beginning to create group practice work groups that include some number of general educators as well as one or more special educators and other certified or classified support staff. One of the SLSD elementary schools reorganized into three smaller "vertical" communities. Each included classroom teachers from kindergarten to grade 5 as well as a special educator and a number of classroom assistants previously assigned either to special education or Title 1. After two years of experimenting, these groups are still constructing the kinds of working relationships that will support their various efforts to change their teaching practices, improve literacy, experiment with multiple intelligences theory, and develop better student assessment systems for what they actually teach. Already there are new roles for the special educators as members of the workgroups.

Two of the workgroups have begun designing curriculum together. Since they were part of the discussion from the beginning, the special educators can help tailor the development of the various learning objectives, activities, and assessment tools to better incorporate the unique learning of labeled students. Being part of the design of general education curriculum from the beginning means that special educators no longer have to try to "fit" labeled students into a completed plan. It also creates opportunities for previous special educators to teach more aspects of the plan to all the students instead of being relegated as "helpers" for those that might be having trouble or need extra help or support. In one of the workgroups the commitment to group practice has allowed them to group all the students into smaller literacy groups, each of the members of the team taking responsibility for several, regardless of the official title or certification, each member of the team contributing support in his or her own areas of knowledge and interest to others so that students in all the groups experience the best teaching of the collective team.

Other buildings are reorganizing more around grade-level or block teams, where groups meet regularly to share curriculum planning, allocate resources, schedule activities, share teaching tasks (e.g. rotating the class through each of the three or four teachers when doing a unit, each teacher focusing on material according to his/her strengths and interests), and to problem solve issues on behalf of the now "mutually owned" students. In some international schools, teams stay with their students, some for as many as 10 years to achieve maximum benefits of long-term relationships among teachers, students and families. The schools here are moving toward a 2-5 year commitment with the same group of students.

In both elementary and secondary schools we also documented the results of co-teaching efforts. One middle school in particular has relied upon this strategy to both share knowledge across general and special educators and to deliver services and supports to very diverse groups of students in block classes. Sometimes these dyadic collaborations have worked. Cross-pollinating their knowledge and skills, teacher pairs have become new forms of educators who benefit both from a shared knowledge base and an appreciation for, and ability to access, others' specialty knowledge. In other situations the team teachers have not achieved a shared working relationship, but instead recapitulated the history of parallel work relations between general and special educators. Each takes on their own tasks and responsibilities, balanced, but clearly different and differentiated. Students quickly learn the differentiation and respect it with their questions, requests and responses.

Personnel preparation programs are reflecting a transition to group practice as well. More gradually, but increasingly, initial preparation programs are merging foundational general and special education content and licensure outcomes. Some states are simultaneously shifting from restrictive, "stand alone" licensure categories to a greater emphasis on "add on" endorsements to initial, usually broader licenses. Innovative continuing professional development opportunities also encourage shared general and special educators to study collaboratively with pre-service students as they pursue continuing professional development and specialization (e.g., Baumgart & Ferguson, 1991; Ferguson, et al., 1994a; Goodlad, 1990). In this way the directions of ongoing professional development can be determined by the needs of a particular group or school to "round out" or increase some area of capacity, say in designing behavioral and emotional supports or extending their use of technology.

From "Delivering Service" to "Providing Learner Supports"

The first two shifts together produce a more fundamental shift from structuring education according to a service metaphor to one that relies upon a support metaphor. As teachers alter their definitions of learning to not just accommodate, but legitimate, different amounts and types of learning for different students, their relationships with students will necessarily become more reciprocal and shared. Students and their families will become participants not just in the curriculum and teaching enterprise, but in the definitions and evidences of learning achievement.

Our traditional, ability-based, norm-driven, categorical approaches use differences in students as sorting categories that led students to the matching curriculum and teaching service that their particular constellation of abilities and disabilities might require. The standard curriculum, for example, was the "service" deemed appropriate to the majority of students – certainly those within the standard range of the norm. If students fell outside that standard range, the curriculum had to be "adapted" or "modified" so that the student's learning either approximated or exceeded the learning achieved by most. As student diversity has increased in our schools, the proportion of students for whom the service of schooling must be adapted or modified has burgeoned. As a result, teachers seem quite clear that the "norm", if it every really existed in the untidy worlds of schools, has nearly disappeared as a useful construct for the design of learning and management of classrooms (Pugach & Seidl, 1995; Putnam, Speigel, & Bruininks, 1995).

Adding the diversity of disability to this mix seems only a small addition. However, the historical baggage that the difference of disability brings to the diversity already present in general education classrooms risks transforming diversity into a deficit rather than transforming disability into just another diversity unless the underlying norm-based assumptions are also transformed (Pugach & Seidl, 1996). Unlike the concept of diversity, disability relies upon the concept of norm. People with disabilities "deviate" from this single standard. The historical response has been to frame the appropriate educational response as one that either overcomes, or at least attenuates, the power of that deviation.

Diversity, by contrast, challenges the very notion that there is one way to educate one norm to be sought. Instead, there are different patterns of achievement and social contribution that fit the various cultural, racial, and gender differences that children and youth bring to schooling. The difference of class illustrates the risk that can occur when the norm-laden difference of disability is added to the norm-challenging differences of culture and gender. Too often the differences of class are viewed in our schools as deficits that impede learning. To be sure, there are experiences children have related to social-economic class that can impede learning, such as having too little food, inadequate housing that compromises children's need for rest, and so on. Indeed, the intersection of disability and class has long been established and continues to be evident in the disproportionate number of children of low socio-economic and minority students served by special education. As a consequence, the life-patterns and values of families within some socio-economic classes – the very same kinds of differences we seek to accommodate and respect for people of other races and cultures – are viewed as in need of remediation rather than respect.

What may help to resolve these contradictions, and to avoid the risk that linking disability and diversity will turn diversity into a deficit, is a new metaphor. We think the metaphor of support offers a promising alternative. According to the American Heritage dictionary, support means "to hold in position", "to prevent from falling, sinking, or slipping", "to bear the weight of, especially from below", and to "lend strength to". The imagery offers not only an appropriate alternative to the norm-based, sorting metaphor of service upon which schooling as long relied; it also offers a way to think about diversity as an opportunity for personalizing growth and participation. Any individual's differences are simply lenses through which to see what is required to "hold in position" and "to prevent from falling, sinking, or slipping".

Within the context of schools, the core relations between teachers and students, the definitions of learning that dominate, and the shared responsibility among educators for achieving student learning all begin with identifying what any student needs to be "held in position" for learning. It supports a shift from viewing any difference or disability in terms of individual limitation to a focus on environmental and social constraints. Support is also grounded in the perspective of the person receiving it, not the person providing it. Thus, all student differences must define the specific opportunities and practices teachers use to support their learning. Various kinds of intensive instruction, physical supports, and accommodations typically viewed as necessary only for some students become opportunities for all students to personalize their learning in ways that mesh with who they are and what they are pursuing as members of their communities.

Our studies have certainly not resolved the three issues defined above. Achieving satisfying and enduring change in schooling is neither simple or quick. Such fundamental changes are arduous, painful and slow in part because the task is large and complex (Fullan & Miles, 1992; Sizer, 1992). The dynamics require engagement in a sociopolitical process that requires people at all levels (individual, classroom, school, district, community, state, and nation) to engage in the "phenomenology of change". We must learn not only how to change our core educational practices, but to do so with an understanding of how those changes are ***experienced*** by students, educators, and community members (Barth, 1990; Fullan & Miles, 1992; Noddings, 1993). We offer the three issues and three arenas of action presented here as a reasonable framework for pursuing this complex task. Although it has emerged from our own understanding of our work, as well as the work of many others, we believe it will continue to guide our efforts to understand and support the changes needed in our schools as we approach a new century. While the task is certainly enormous, it is also necessary.

Project Impact

The RSR project was operated through 5 objectives. The first two objectives involved the two research study strands. The third objective outlined plans for documenting and disseminating the findings of these studies. The last two objectives detailed plans for the thorough evaluation and efficient management of the Project as a whole. Table 1 briefly summarizes the status of each objective and activity by the end of the project period, incorporating design changes that were made along the way. Table 2 summarizes the project activities with District and School Partners.

Table 1: Status of Each Objective and Activity at End of Project

Objectives	Project Status
1.0 Begin, manage and complete Research Study 1: Multi-Year Case Studies in four schools.	
1.1 Identify 2 elementary and 2 secondary schools, one each rural and urban, that meet criteria as schools engaged in both inclusion and systemic school reform.	• The project worked with 5 elementary schools and one middle school in one school district. • The project also worked with 2 elementary schools, 1 middle school and 1 high school in a second district; through a district-wide cooperative research agreement. • The project worked district-wide across 14 schools in a newly consolidated district.

1.2 Negotiate a collaborative research agreement with each school's Site Council.	- Collaborative research agreements were negotiated with each school's site council.
1.3 Collect, manage, analyze and summarize data for each school.	- Data were collected, managed and analyzed for each school.
1.4 Prepare quarterly and annual interim case reports for each school.	- Reports were prepared for each participating school according to individual timelines.
1.5 Prepare final, individual school case study reports and one cross-case analysis report.	- Multiple papers and reports were prepared to meet this objective.
2.0 Begin, manage, and complete Research Study 2: Teacher Curriculum/Teaching/Membership Studies with nine teachers.	
2.1 Identify 3 teachers for each of the three project years who have been or are currently participating in the Building Capacity for Change professional development project.	- Eleven teachers were identified from 6 schools over the course of the 3 project years.
2.2 Train teachers to prepare fieldnotes and interview other schools and classroom participants.	- Teachers were trained to prepare field notes and conduct interviews. Not all teachers, however, used this method of data collection.
2.3 Conduct additional participation observation visits and reflective debriefing interviews at least twice per month with each teacher.	- Visits and observations were more individualized for teachers. With some there was more frequent contact, with some less.
2.4 Transcribe, manage, analyze and summarize data in collaboration with each teacher.	- This was completed with teachers who used observation and interview for data collection.
2.5 Conduct twice quarterly focus group interviews with all participating teacher researchers to compare emerging analysis.	- This was done more on an individual basis with teachers as they worked on individual projects.
2.6 Prepare quarterly and annual interim case reports with each teacher.	
2.7 Prepare final individual case study reports and one cress-case analysis report in collaboration with all nine teachers.	- This was done differently with individual teachers. Some teachers were more formal with the process and used their data as a masters project in the graduate program in special education.
3.0 Improve, revise and disseminate Project products.	
3.1 Revise modules annually in response to recommendations of teacher collaborators and BCC participants.	- Modules revised annually in response to teachers, course participants and other users.
3.2 Prepare a monograph length compilation of school case studies in year three.	- This task is in progress and will include case studies as well as other products.
3.3 Prepare articles reporting results of curriculum / teaching/ membership study.	- Six articles and three book chapters were published in journals.
3.4 Disseminate products directly to clearinghouses, Regional Resource Centers, and Schools Projects mailing list activities.	- Copies of this report will be sent to clearinghouses, Regional Resource Centers, and Schools Projects mailing list activities.

3.5 Disseminate products and project results through professional conferences and publications.	• Project activities and results disseminated at local, state and national conferences and workshops and through professional publications.
4.0 Summative evaluation of Project activities.	
4.1 Evaluate inclusion of students with disabilities in participating schools and classrooms in terms of both learning and membership.	• District-wide evaluation of the status of special education supports and services in one school district through a collaborative research agreement as part of the district's strategic plan for school improvement.
4.2 Evaluate BCC procedures for teaching teachers curriculum/teaching/membership strategies.	• Evaluations completed at the end of each term demonstrated high satisfaction..
4.3 Evaluate modules on curriculum/teaching/membership strategies.	• Modules evaluated and revised according to feedback.
4.4 Evaluate overall program operation and impact.	
5.0 Manage Project activities.	
5.1 Plan and update project timelines.	• All project timelines were evaluated and updated during weekly project meetings.
5.2 Establish and maintain project staffing.	• Staffing was established and maintained over the duration of the project.
5.3 Ensure participation of under-represented groups.	• Projects exceeded all university Affirmative Action Guidelines.
5.4 Coordinate project plans, activities, and management with UAP Consumer Advisory Committee and project collaborators.	• Project Plans, activities and management coordinated with Advisory committee and project collaborators.
5.6 Report to Project funders.	

Table 2 : Summary of District and School Partnerships and Project Activities

Schools	Activity	Date
Bohemia Elementary School	• School Profile	Fall 95-Spring 96
	*Phase I (General Information)	
	Teacher/Parent Interviews	Fall 95
	*Phase II (Assessment)	
	Teacher/Parent Interviews	Winter 96
	• Teacher Surveys	Winter 96
	• Parent Surveys	Spring 96
	• Student Surveys	Spring 96
	• Study of teacher work groups	School Year 96-97
	• Study of students' response to work groups	Winter/Spring 97
Lincoln Middle School	• Staff Interviews	Winter 95
	• Parent interviews	Winter/95
	• Post-Brown Document	Spring 95
	• Staff presentation	Fall 95
	• Parent presentation	Fall 95

	• Staff Surveys	Spring 96
	• Staff Interviews	Spring 96
	• School Improvement Plan Evaluation	Spring 96
	• Staff presentation	Spring/96
	• 6th grade transition visit survey	Spring 96
	• 1997 staff update survey	Spring 97
Dorena Elementary School	• Parent interviews	Fall 95
	• Parent info presentation	Spring 96
	• Teacher interviews	Spring 96
Latham Elementary School	• Staff interviews	Winter 96
	• Parent interviews	Winter 96
	• Presentation to staff about staff	Winter 96
	• Presentation to staff about parents	Winter 96
Harrison Elementary School	• Parent interviews	Spring 96
	• Presentation to staff	Spring 96
	• Presentation to staff	Fall 96
	• Presentation to parents (PTA)	Fall 96
Districts		
Junction City School District (Goals 2000 grant)	• Bursting Bubbles!: Meeting All Students' Needs in the General Curriculum." Taught by D. Ferguson, G. Ralph, and C. Droege. **Three day workshop for general and special educators at the Junction City School District**. January 19, 1995, February 2, 1995 and March 29, 1995. Junction City, Or.	Winter/Spring 95
	• District wide staff interviews	Spring 96
	• Parent survey	Summer 96
	• Task Force meetings to prepare final recommendations	Winter/Spring 97
South Lane School District	• Bursting Bubbles!: Meeting All Students' Needs in the General Curriculum." Taught by D. Ferguson, G. Ralph, and J. Lester. **Three day workshop for general and special educators at the Cottage Grove School District**. December 7, 1994, January 18, 1995, and March 29, 1995, Cottage Grove, Or.	Fall 94 - Spring 95
	• Evaluation of Special Education Services and Supports •Teacher/Administrator interviews •Parent Surveys	Spring 97
	• 5 Part Course on Assessment for district educators	Winter 1995
Lebanon Community School District Program Improvement Information System	• Student, Teacher, Parent Surveys	• Winter 96- Spring 98

Project impact generally fell into two broad categories: (1) teaching activities (inservices, workshops, institutes, and presentations) and (2) development and dissemination of products and publications.

1) Teaching Activities

Table 3: RSR Workshops and Presentations

"Supporting Learning: It's not always a matter of money." Presented with D. Ferguson, C. Droege, H. Gudjonsdottir. **S.A.F.E. in Washington, 3rd Annual Spring Parent Conference,** April 5, 1997, Kirkland, WA.

"Working with Grownups: Teaching and learning cooperation with educators." Presented with Hafdis Gudjonsdottir and Mary Dalmau. **Annual Conference of the Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps.** November 23, 1996. New Orleans, LA.

"Snapping the Big Picture." Presented with Caroline Moore. **Annual Conference of the Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps.** November 21, 1996. New Orleans, LA.

"Promising Trends for Increasing the Common Ground." Presented with J. Lester, C. Droege, H. Gudjonsdottir, G. Ralph. **Annual Conference of the Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps.** November 21, 1996. New Orleans, LA.

"Preparing for Diversity: Teacher education and schools of the future." Presented with D. Ferguson, M. Dalmau, C. Droege, H. Gudjonsdottir, J. Lester, and G. Ralph. **Annual Conference of the Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps.** November 21, 1996. New Orleans, LA.

"Personalizing (not adapting) Curriculum: General education approaches to inclusive learning." D. Ferguson. **Better All Together III: Visions and Strategies for Inclusive Education Conference.** October 31, 1996. Athens, Ga.

Figuring Out What to do with the Special Education Grown-ups in Restructuring Schools." **Better All Together III: Visions and Strategies for Inclusive Education Conference.** October 31, 1996. Athens, Ga.

"Where are you now and where do you want to go?" Presented by Dianne Ferguson at the **Education For Everyone: Restructuring for Inclusive Education Conference.** October 22, 1996. New Orleans, LA.

"Problem Solving and Action Planning at the Student Level." Presented by Dianne Ferguson and Anne Smith at the **Education For Everyone: Restructuring for Inclusive Education Conference.** October 22, 1996. New Orleans, LA.

"Can we just do it? Taking Stock: Rethinking the Agenda." Ferguson, D., Meyer, G., Droege, C., Lester, J., and Gudjonsdottir, H. **Oregon Department of Education Summer Institute.** July 30- August 1, 1996. Bend, Or.

"Defining Change: One School's Five Year Collaborative Effort." Presented by Ferguson, D. **American Research Association, National Conference.** April 8, 1996. New York, NY.

"School Change Through Broad Based Staff Self-Reflection." Ferguson, D., Holden, L., McCoy, BJ., Meyer, G., & Ralph, G. **Annual Conference of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.** March 16, 1996. New Orleans, La.

"Individually Tailored Learning: Designing Leaning for ALL Students." Ferguson, D. **Annual Conference of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.** March 16, 1996. New Orleans, La.

"Embedding Inclusion in School Restructuring." Ferguson, D., Meyer, G., Droege, C. **Annual Conference of the Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps.** November 30, 1995. San Francisco, Ca.

"Fred, he comes and he goes, too": Examining the role of the "Inclusion Facilitator." Ferguson, D., Cameron, S., Katul, N. **Annual Conference of the Association for Persons with severe handicaps.** November 30, 1995. San Francisco, Ca.

"Creating Inviting Classrooms." Presented by D. Ferguson, C. Droege, & G. Meyer. **Annual Oregon Department of Education Conference on Strategies for Including All Students.** November 14, 1995. Portland, OR.

"How Systemic Are Our Systemic Reforms?" Presented by Dianne Ferguson at the **International Inclusion and Systemic Reform Conference.** May 17, 1995. Bethesda, MD.

"The Real Challenge of Inclusion: Confessions of a so-called 'Rabid Inclusionist.'" Presented by Dianne Ferguson at the **Visions and Strategies for Inclusive Education Conference.** March 10, 1995. Athens, GA.

2) Products and Dissemination

Table 4: Publications and Products Related to RSR

Title	Product	Status
Building Capacity for Sustainable Change: The Video Option. (Sper 697- Curriculum Planning I).	Video Course (three two-hour tapes plus course packet) 3 credits	Video tapes completed for Fall Terms 1994, 1995, 1996 & 1997
Bohemia Case Study Lincoln Case Study Dorena Case Study	Bohemia, Lincoln, Dorena Case Studies-	In progress
Ferguson, D. L., Moore, C., & Meyer, G. *School improvement profiling.*	Module	Completed
Ferguson, D. L. (in press). Changing tactics: Research on embedding inclusion reforms within general education restructuring efforts. *International Journal of Education.*	Journal Article	Completed
Ferguson, D.L., Ralph, G., & Katul, N. (in press). From "special educators to educators: The case for mixed ability groups of teacher in restructured schools. In W. Sailor (Ed.), *Inclusive education and school/community partnerships.* Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes.	Book Chapter	Completed
Ferguson, D.L. (in press). How systemic are our systemic reforms? Product of International Inclusion and Systemic Reform Conference. May 17, 1995. Bethesda, Md.	Journal Article	Completed

Ferguson, D. L. (in review). Defining change: One school's five year collaborative effort. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies of Education.*	Journal Article	Completed
Ferguson, D.L. (1996). Is it inclusion yet? Bursting the bubbles. In M. Berres, P. Knoblock, D. Ferguson, & C. Woods (Eds.). *Creating tomorrow's schools today: Stories of inclusion, change, and renewal (pp. 16-37).* NY: Teachers College Press.	Book Chapter	Completed
Ferguson, D.L, Ralph, G., Lester, J., Droege, C., Gudjonsdottir, H., & Meyer, G. (1996). *Designing Classroom Curriculum for Personalized Learning. Module 1D.* Eugene, OR: Specialized Training Program, University of Oregon.	Curriculum Planning Module	Completed
Moore, C. (1996). *The School Visit Guide.* Eugene, OR: Specialized Training Program: University of Oregon.	School Observation Guide	Completed
Rivers, E.S., Ferguson, D.L., Lester, J., & Droege, C. (1996). *Student Membership Snapshots: An ongoing problem-finding and problem-solving strategy. Module 4E.* Eugene, OR: Specialized Training Program, University of Oregon.	Student and Classroom Observation Guide	Completed
Ferguson, D. L. & Meyer, G. (1996). Creating Together the Tools to Reinvent Schools. In M. Berres, P. Knoblock, D. Ferguson, & C. Woods (Eds.) *Creating tomorrow's schools today: Stories of inclusion, change, and renewal (pp. 97-129).* NY: Teachers College Press.	Book Chapter	Completed
Ferguson, D. L., & Meyer, G. (in press). Talking across borders and languages: Encouraging international research discussion and collaboration. *International Journal of Education.*	Journal Article	Completed
Ferguson, D. L., & Ralph, G. (Fall, 1996). The changing role of special educators: A development waiting for a trend. C*ontemporary Education, 68*(1), 49-51.	Journal Article	Completed
Ferguson, D. L. (1995). The real challenge of inclusion: Confessions of a "rabid inclusionist." Phi Delta Kappan, 77(4), 281-287.	Journal Article	Completed
"What is an Inclusion Specialist? A Preliminary Investigation"	Masters Project - Sarah Cameron	Completed – Spring 1994
"Including Students with Severe Disabilities in the Elementary Classroom: A review of two teaching strategies"	Masters Project – Bonnie McKinley	Completed – Summer 1995
"Inclusion Specialists: Are they really fostering inclusion?"	Masters Project - Nadia Katul	Completed – Summer 1995
"The use of the Student Membership Snapshot as a tool for functional assessment school-wide of behavior referrals"	Masters Project - Sheila Thomas	Completed – Spring 1997

"Strategies for Teaching Reading in First Grade Classrooms of General and Special Education Students."	Masters Project - Martha Merritt	Completed – Spring 1997
"How Schools Learn about Disabilities."	Masters Project - Ellen Wood	Completed – Fall 1997
"Students' Perceptions of School Teams: Experiencing change at Bohemia Elementary School"	Masters Project - Lissa Wyckoff	Completed – Fall 1997
"Using the ABA to design curriculum with kindergarten parents."	Masters Project - Janet Williams	Completed – Winter 1998
"Finding Our Beliefs: An interactive process for making overt the unexplored belief systems of teachers"	Masters Project - B.J. McCoy	Completed – Spring 1998
"Let's Read and Write Together: Emergent literacy with students with significant disabilities in inclusive settings"	Masters Project - Ayana Kee	Completed – Spring 1998

For Further Information

We have prepared this final report in two versions. One includes all the draft and published products mentioned in the report. The other does not. If you have received the Executive summary version without attachments, you may secure any of the mentioned products in their entirety from us at the:

Schools Projects
Specialized Training Program
College of Education
1235 University of Oregon
Eugene, Ore. 97403

Phone: (541) 346-5313
TDD: (541) 346-2466
Fax: (541) 346-5517
Email: diannef@oregon.uoregon.edu

Assurances

In accordance with the federal dissemination requirements (20 U.S.C. 1409 (g)), we have mailed the Executive Summary of this final report (without Attachments) to the following:

HEATH Resource Center
One Dupont Circle, Suite 800
Washington, D.C. 20036-1193

National Clearinghouse for Professions in
Special Education
Council for Exceptional Children
1920 Association Drive
Reston, Virginia 22314

National Information Center for Children
and Youth with Disabilities (NICHY)
P.O. Box 1492
Washington, D.C. 20013-1492

Technical Assistance for Parent
Programs Project (TAPP)
Federation for Children with
Special Needs
95 Berkeley Street, Suite 104
Boston, Massachusetts 02116

National Diffusion Network
555 New Jersey Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20208-5645

ERIC/OSEP Special Project
ERIC Clearinghouse on Handicapped and
Gifted Children
Council for Exceptional Children
1920 Association Drive
Reston, Virginia 22091

Child and Adolescent Service System
Program (CASSP)
Technical Assistance Center
Georgetown University
2233 Wisconsin Ave. N.W., Suite 215
Washington, D.C. 20007

Northeast Regional Resource Center
Trinity College of Vermont
208 Colchester Avenue
Burlington, Vermont 05401

Mid-South Regional Resource Center
University of Kentucky
114 Mineral Industries Building
Lexington, Kentucky 40506-0051

South Atlantic Regional Resource Center
Florida Atlantic University
1236 North University Dr.
Plantation, Florida 33322

Mountain Plains Regional
Resource Center
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Western Regional Resource Center
College of Education
University of Oregon
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Great Lakes Area
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700 Ackerman Road, Suite 440
Columbus, OH 43202

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Barth, R. (1990). "A personal vision of a good school." Phi Delta Kappan 71: 512-516.

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ATTACHMENT I

- **Selected School Products:**
  1. Sample Research Activities Agreement
  2. Sample Student Surveys
  3. Sample Educator Survey
  4. Sample Parent Survey

Collaborative Research Agreement

During our discussion, we agreed to the following:

- Schools Projects staff will assist Dorena Elementary in the creation of a School Profile. Some information will be collected through observations and interviews with school staff and community members.
- Schools Projects staff will help to identify strategies for increasing working relationships with parents. Initial activities might include interviews with parents.
- Schools Projects staff will attend selected site council and staff planning meetings to collect general information for the use of Dorena's staff, and to help with the generation of new ideas and strategies in areas defined by Dorena.
- Other:

The Schools Projects have agreed to provide:

- money for substitute time to be used as determined by the school
- data collection equipment
- technical assistance and support regarding research activities
- general collaborative problem solving support and assistance
- information and resources searches that might assist the reform agenda
- other:

Signed:

Konnie L. Garman - site council chair Dorena Ele.

Mary F. Koepfle - President - Parent Club

Date: Sept 13, 1995

MEMORANDUM

DATE: December 5, 1995
TO: Latham Elementary School
Rich Brunaugh, Principal
FROM: Dianne Ferguson
Schools Projects Staff, University of Oregon
RE: Research Activities Agreement
CC: Jackie Lester, Gwen Meyer

This memorandum spells out our plan for an initial phase of collaborative research activities at Latham Elementary School and is a summary of a discussion held at the Site Council meeting on Nov. 15, 1995. These activities will be connected with a federally funded research project (Reinventing Schools Research Project) based within the Schools Projects, University of Oregon.

The overall purpose of our research is to deepen our understanding and interpretation of educational reform as it evolves within the culture of individual schools and classrooms. One of our interests is to focus on how the inclusion of students with disabilities affects, and is affected by, broader school reform efforts. However, we strongly believe that this specific interest in inclusion cannot be separated from a more thorough understanding of the change process in general. Moreover, we are also convinced that any full understanding of the change process will only happen in a collaborative partnership between local districts and university-based researchers.

Listed below are the initial tasks that emerged from the Site Council meeting. We should emphasize that for any of our proposed activities, now or in the future, participation by faculty, staff, students, parents, and others is entirely voluntary. There will be no repercussions for anyone who chooses not to participate in any phase or activity of the research effort. All precautions will be taken to maintain confidentiality, and individual participants will be asked to review and sign an informed consent further clarifying this commitment.

Areas of Focus:

1) Latham's Internal Community- Beginning in early January, and continuing for approximately 2-4 weeks, we propose to complete a set of tasks that would, in addition to the existing demographic and achievement data, contribute a more in-depth picture of Latham's strengths, issues, and capacities.

Specific Activities

- Interview all willing Latham faculty and staff.

- Observe in classrooms of participating faculty.
- Summarize interview and observation data.
- Present summarized data to faculty and staff in time to assist in revision of program improvement plans.

2) Latham's External Community- We propose to interview family members of Latham students. In addition to a presentation and executive summary of the results of these interviews, we would use the major themes from the interviews to assist Latham faculty to construct a parent survey that could be used repeatedly to generate ongoing program improvement data.

Specific Activities

- Identify a sample of family members to interview. We will ask the Site Council, Principal, and other relevant contributors to generate a list that samples an appropriate range of grade levels and constituencies.
- Conduct individual interviews with family members.
- Transcribe and analyze interview data.
- Prepare a presentation of interview results for Latham staff and parents.
- Prepare an executive summary of interview data for inclusion in Latham School Profile.
- Revise existing survey for next administration.

Resources

The Schools Projects will contribute staff time of the RSR Project Principal Investigator and the needed time of two additional staff researchers.

Signed: ______________________ President, Site Council

______________________ Principal

MEMORANDUM

DATE: November 15, 1995

TO: Harrison Elementary School Site Council
Ralph Pruitt, Principal

FROM: Dianne Ferguson,
Schools Projects Staff, University of Oregon

RE: Research Activities Agreement

CC: Ginevra Ralph, Gwen Meyer, Jackie Lester

This memorandum spells out our plan for an initial phase of collaborative research activities at Harrison Elementary School and is a summary of a discussion held at the Site Council meeting on October 26, 1995. These activities will be connected with, and partially overlap with, a federally funded research project (Reinventing Schools Research Project) based within the Schools Projects, University of Oregon.

The overall purpose of our research continues to be to deepen our understanding and interpretation of educational reform initiatives as they evolve within the culture and circumstances of individual schools and classrooms. One of our interests continues to focus on how the inclusion of students with disabilities affects, and is affected by, these larger school reform efforts. However, we are more convinced than ever that this specific interest in inclusion cannot be artificially separated from a more thorough understanding of the change process in genera, regardless of the specific area of school reform under discussion. Moreover, we are also convinced that any full understanding of this change process will only happen in a fully collaborative partnership between local districts and university-based researchers. We intend this memorandum of research activities for an initial phase of collaboration to further this spirit of collaboration and support.

Listed below are the initial tasks that emerged from the Site Council meeting. We should emphasize that for any of our proposed activities, now or in the future, participation by faculty, staff, students, parents and others is entirely voluntary. There will be no repercussions for anyone who declines to participate in any phase or activity of the research effort. All precautions will be taken to maintain confidentiality, and individual participants will be asked to review and sign an informed consent further clarifying this commitment.

Initial Area of Focus: Harrison's External Community

Beginning in late Fall and continuing into Winter (roughly December - February), we propose to interview 40-50 family members of Harrison students. In addition to a presentation and executive summary of the results of these interviews, we would use the major themes from them to assist Harrison faculty to construct a parent survey that could be used repeatedly to generate ongoing program improvement data.

Specific Activities

- Identify a sample of family members to interview. We will ask the Site Council, Principal, and other relevant contributors to generate a list that samples an appropriate range of grade levels and constituencies.
- Conduct individual and focus group interviews with family members.
- Transcribe and analyze interview data.
- Prepare a presentation of interview results for both Harrison staff and parents.
- Prepare an executive summary of interview and focus group data for inclusion in Harrison School Profile.
- Use themes identified from interviews to construct sample response formats and question content for a Harrison School parent survey that could be used on a continuing basis to generate data for program improvement plans.
- Meet with faculty to select response formats and questions for survey.
- Construct survey.
- Assist in the collection and compilation of survey data.
- Assist in the interpretation and presentation of survey findings to Harrison faculty and parents.

Resources

The Schools Projects will contribute staff time of the RSR Project Principal Investigator and the needed time of one additional staff researcher. Compensation for two additional members of the research team will be borne by Harrison. The total costs to Harrison will be $1300 for the above listed tasks, to be paid through contract with the Schools Projects, University of Oregon.

Future Area of Focus: Harrison's Internal Community

A second set of tasks we could negotiate would be a contribution to the School Profile task set for Harrison. In addition to existing demographic and achievement data, we would be able to contribute a more in-depth picture of Harrison's strengths, issues, and capacities. This set of tasks would involve (1) interviewing all willing Harrison faculty and staff, (2) observing in their classrooms, and (3) analyzing and presenting resulting data in time to assist in revision of program improvement plans.

Junction City School District

Reporting Student Achievement to Parents

The Junction City School District has received a grant from the Oregon Department of Education to help improve student achievement through a variety of assessment and reporting procedures.

Parents and families are a critical element in pursuing this goal and so we need to know better what your current understanding and preferences are in order for us to build on them.

Please take a few minutes to tell us how it is for you.

Note: Please do not refer to more than one school on each survey form. (You may obtain additional survey forms at the District Office, or make copies yourself)

In this Survey I am telling you about: (Check ONE) JC High ☐ Oaklea Middle ☐ Laurel Elementary ☐ Territorial Elementary ☐ Other, ... ☐

First tell us about your overall impressions of the school

Directions: Finish the sentences below with the 3-5 words (or phrases) from the box below which best describe your answer. You may use the same words as often as you like (just write the numbers of the words or phrases you choose). If none of the words are right for you - use your own words.

The things I like most about the school are ......

The most important things for children are ......

The schools highest priorities should be

1) care
2) challenge
3) class-size
4) collaboration
5) commitment
6) community
7) competition
8) control
9) cooperation
10) creativity
11) discipline
12) energy
13) fairness
14) fun
15) funding
16) kindness
17) knowledge
18) learning
19) math
20) music/art
21) nothing
22) order
23) P.E.
24) perseverance
25) play
26) questioning
27) reading
28) respect
29) safety
30) success
31) teaching
32) understanding
33) welcome
34) every-day-life-skills
35) extending-kids-talents
36) getting-along-with-others
37) learning-another-language
38) opportunities-for-all-kids
39) school-to-work-transition
40) parent-teacher-cooperation
41) problem-solving
42) standards-of-behavior
43) trying-new-things

The areas I would like the school to do better in are ......

The things the school does best are ......

I think too much emphasis is placed on ......

Essential things for kids to learn are ......

In general how much do you know about your children's achievements at school?

☛ Directions

Your children have the opportunity to learn many different things at school. On this page we have listed a number of different learning areas, and ten ways parents have told us what they know about their children's achievements at school.

Tell us what you know about your children's achievements in each learning area by writing (in the check-boxes) the # of the parent statement that is closest to your experience.

Note: If you wish to give two responses for any area, use the second check-box for your second choice.

Ten ways that parents have told us what they know about their children's achievements at school.

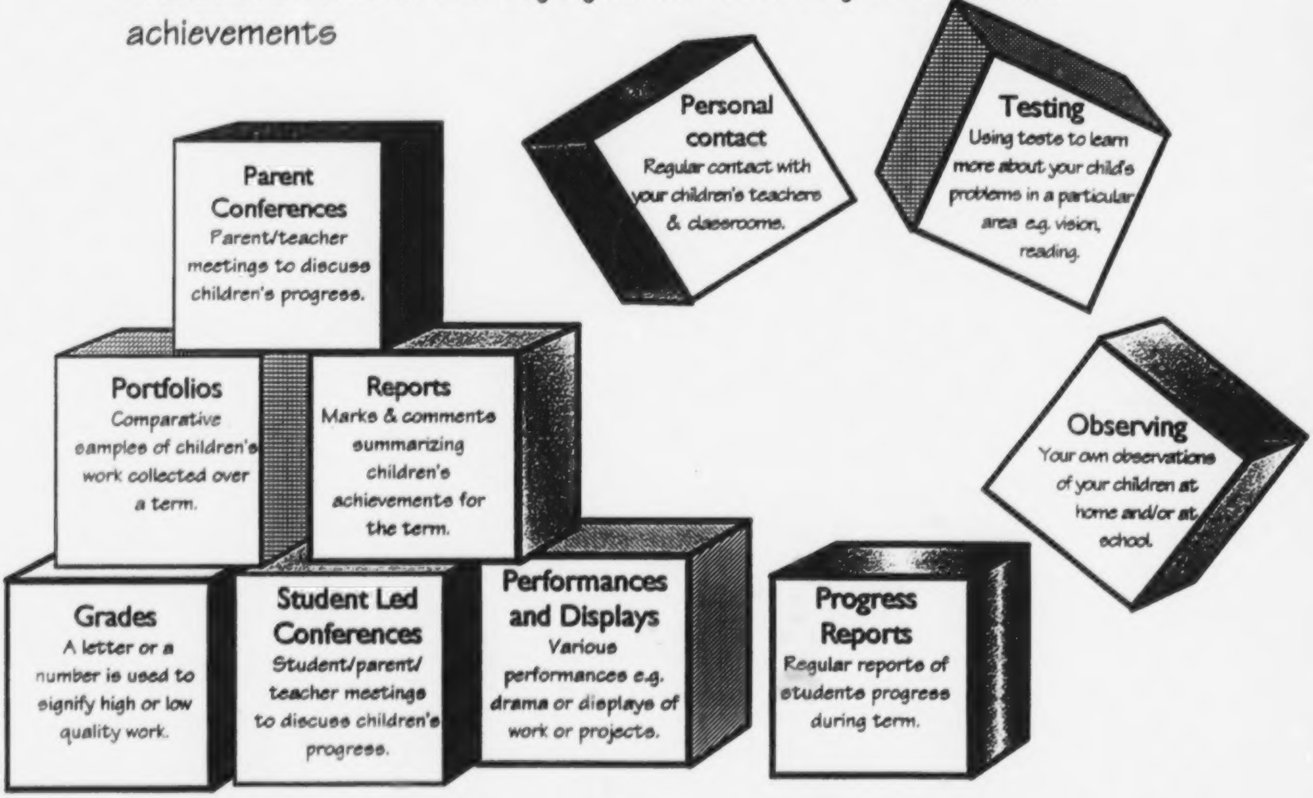
#1 - I know the grades they get in this area, but don't know details about their achievements
#2 - I mainly get information about their problems in this area
#3 - My children tell me lots about what they are learning in this area.
#4 - I see my children using their learning in this area in their everyday life
#5 - I learn most about my children's achievements in this area through personal contact with their teachers.
#6 - I have a good understanding of my children's strengths and weaknesses in this area.
#7 - I really don't know what my children are accomplishing in this area.
#8 - I know lots of details about my children's achievements.
#9 - Learning about my children's achievements in this area is not important to me.
#10 - Other, i.e. ....

Learning Areas

	Responses 1st choice	Responses 2nd choice
Athletics and sport	☐	☐
Becoming responsible citizens	☐	☐
Caring for nature and the environment	☐	☐
Communication - public speaking	☐	☐
Computer skills	☐	☐
Cooperative ways of working	☐	☐
Creativity e.g. drawing, painting, making things	☐	☐
Foreign languages	☐	☐
Getting along with other people	☐	☐
Initiative and problem solving	☐	☐
Learning about the world and the peoples of the world	☐	☐
Learning to be a lifelong learner	☐	☐
Mathematics	☐	☐
Music	☐	☐
Reading	☐	☐
Science	☐	☐
Self-confidence and belief in themselves	☐	☐
Study skills	☐	☐
Understanding work - preparation for work	☐	☐
Writing	☐	☐

Any other comments?

These are some of the ways you learn about your children's achievements



Parent Conferences
Parent/teacher meetings to discuss children's progress.

Personal contact
Regular contact with your children's teachers & classrooms.

Testing
Using tests to learn more about your child's problems in a particular area e.g. vision, reading.

Portfolios
Comparative samples of children's work collected over a term.

Reports
Marks & comments summarizing children's achievements for the term.

Observing
Your own observations of your children at home and/or at school.

Grades
A letter or a number is used to signify high or low quality work.

Student Led Conferences
Student/parent/teacher meetings to discuss children's progress.

Performances and Displays
Various performances e.g. drama or displays of work or projects.

Progress Reports
Regular reports of students progress during term.

Directions: **You can build a picture of your children's achievements from a number of different types of information. Which ways have you used? How useful is the information you have gained from each of these?**

☑ **Check one box for each information type.**

	Very useful	Sort of useful	Not useful	N/A	I have not experienced this, but I would like to know more about it.
Grades	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Observing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Parent/teacher conferences	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Performances & displays	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Personal contact	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Portfolios	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Reports	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Student led conferences	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Testing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

What other ways do you learn about your children's achievements?

How many children who live in your home ......

(1) attend this school?

Girls ☐

Boys ☐

(2) also receive special education assistance & have an IEP?

Girls ☐

Boys ☐

How do you know if there is a problem with your child's learning? How do you find out more if you are concerned?

In your own words tell us what you think are the most important things for students to take with them when they graduate from this school............

Considering the school overall ....

? *How do parents form a picture of the overall programs and achievements of their children's schools?*

Participation - Working together

Check the box that describes your interest or involvement:

	I would like to do this	I do this sometimes > 1 per month	I do this often < 1 per month
Helping in classrooms	☐	☐	☐
Conferences	☐	☐	☐
Sporting Events	☐	☐	☐
Fundraising	☐	☐	☐
Site Council	☐	☐	☐
Visiting my children's classroom/s	☐	☐	☐

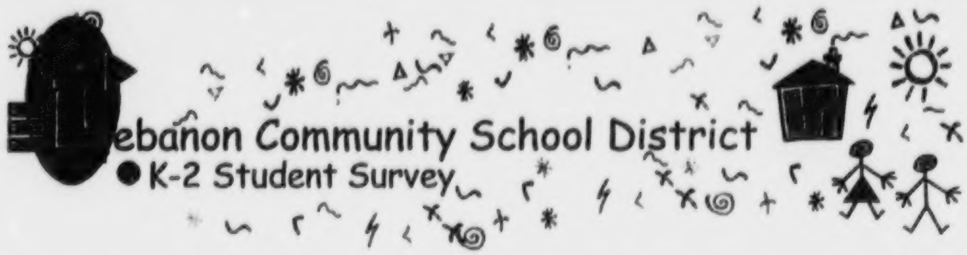
Any other comments?

Thank YOU!

Please return to:
J.C. Surveys (Attn. Nadia Katul)
Schools Projects (STP)
1235 University of Oregon
Eugene OR 97403-1235

Prepared for Junction City School District by Mary C. Dalmau, Schools Projects, College of Education, University of Oregon, May 1996

BEST COPY AVAILABLE



ebanon Community School District
● K-2 Student Survey

This package contains:

1. Information to assist you in administering this survey with your class:
    - Section 1: Preparing the survey forms: Adding demographic information
    - Section 2: Administrating the surveys
2. Materials
    1) Enough survey forms for the students in your class/group
    2) Overhead transparancies for each page of the survey
3. Support for students to complete the survey

It is important that as many students as possible take part in the survey. In addition to the support offered to each student with writing about their likes and dislikes (described in Section 2), Section 1 suggests a number of different ways of supporting students to complete the survey.

Section 1: Preparing the survey forms: Adding demographic information

In order to match demographic information to student survey responses (AND protect confidentiality) we have provided boxes on the top of the first page of each survey form for coded student information. All that is required is that you place a letter in 4-5 boxes for each survey form (see table below).

NOTE: the students will not place their names on their survey responses. We suggest that you distribute the prepared surveys with students names attached on *stickys* so that they can be removed before the survey is handed in.

Box 1:	**Gender**	**Box 2:**	**1st language**	**Box 3:**	**Grade level**
A	female	A	English	K	K
B	male	B	Other	A	1
				B	2

Additional support given to complete survey

Box 4:	**Additional support to complete survey**
A	Assistance of peer tutor (reading or organizing support)
B	Responses written by support person from students verbal answers
C	Other support
No letter	If student completes survey independently with class

Student support or special program

Box 5:	**Special Program**
A	Student has IEP
B	Student is eligible for Title 1 support
C	Student is considered to be in the TAG group
D	Student is not in one of these groups

Section 2: Administering the Surveys (K-2)

We suggest that the students complete the survey as a class group. Overhead transparencies have been prepared for each page of the survey so that you can lead the student through the 2 pages of the survey form question by question. (Use the symbols to assist the students who cannot read the survey easily identify each question as you move through the survey).

Notes & Suggestions

- **Purpose for doing the survey:** Before beginning the survey discuss the purpose with the students, i.e. we wish them to tell us what they feel about school so that we can all work together to make the school better.
- **Confidentiality:** also discuss what confidentiality means and why it is important, i.e. so everyone gets a say and no-one has to worry about what others think about what they say. **Please explain to the student that they are not to put their names on the survey form, and that they are to remove the *sticky* with their name on it before handing their survey in.**
- **Overheads and symbols:** for each page of the survey you will be provided with an overhead transparency. On the survey form each question has been identified by a small symbol or picture. Read the question out loud and identify its location by the symbol or picture (clarify the meaning if necessary by discussing with group),
- **Drawing Likes and Not likes:** The first two questions ask the student to draw pictures of what they *like* and *do not like* about school. After they have completed the survey we suggest that someone (e.g. a group of 4-5 students, parent volunteers, instructional assistants) be asked to go around the class and ask each student to describe what they have drawn and write the key words below the drawings in the space provided.
- **Assistance:** for those students who cannot complete the form independently, assistance may be provided, either by a peer tutor or an adult. In most cases it would be better if the adult were not the teacher or educational aide who usually works with the student.

Notes

Lebanon Community School District

K-2 Student Survey

School ________ Date ________ Circle grade level K 1 2

[1] [2] [4] [5]

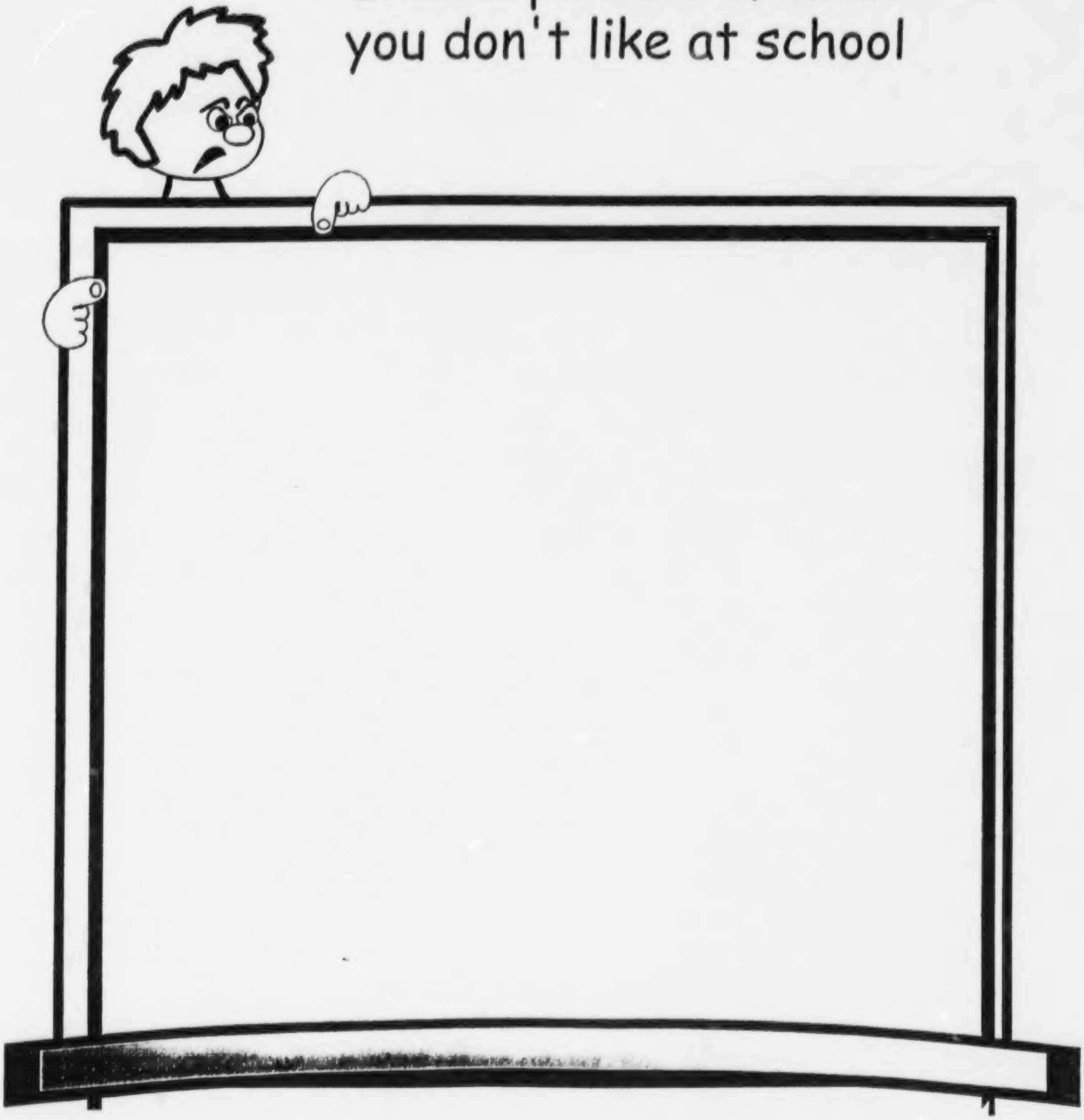
Draw a picture of what you like at school

My picture is about ____________________________

____ [1-2]

Q.5 →

Draw a picture of what you don't like at school



My picture is about__________________________

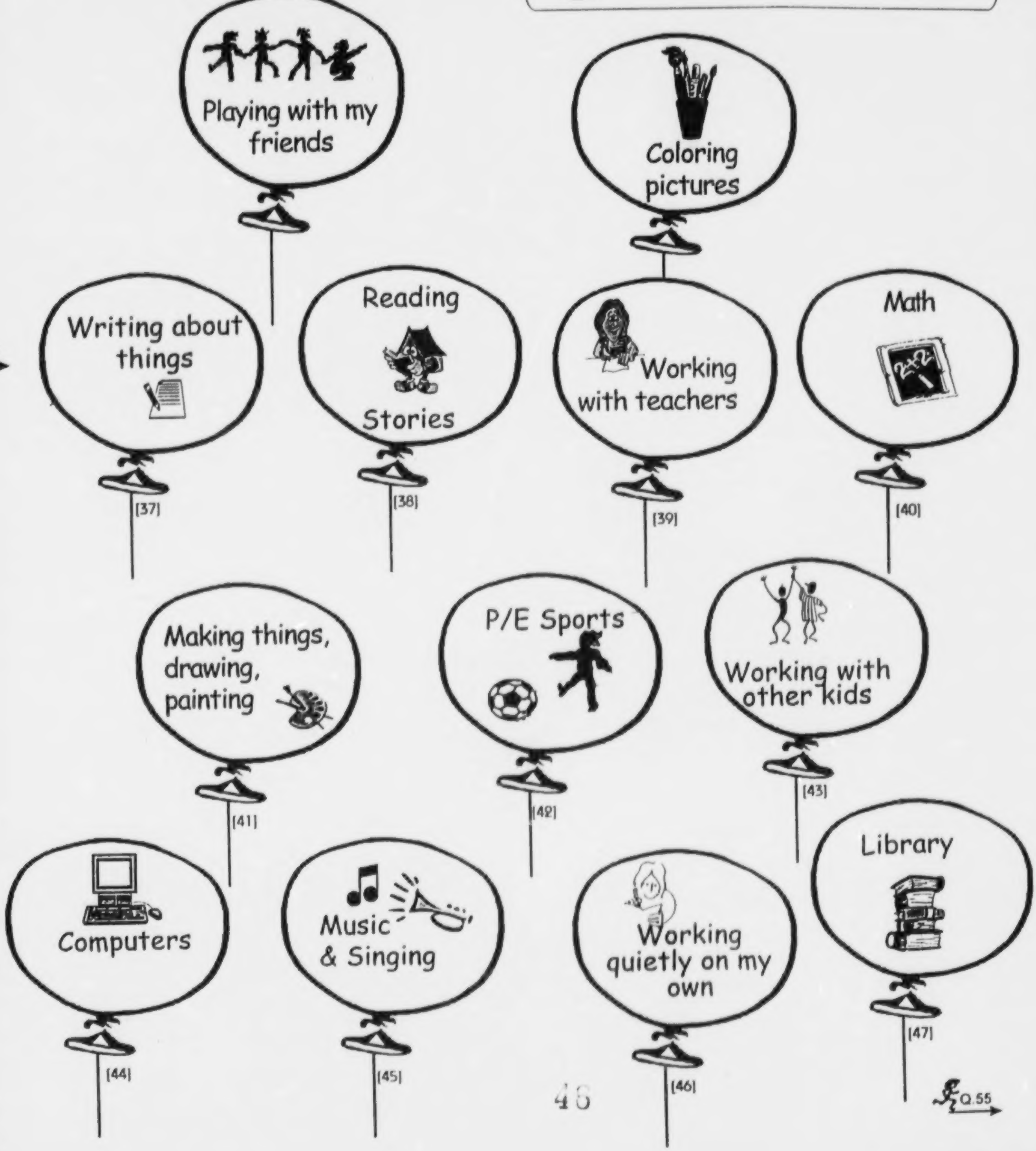
______________________________________ [5-6]

Q.37 →

Color the balloons to show how you feel about...

I like it!	Green	[a]
It's Okay!	Yellow	[b]
I don't like it!	Red	[c]

Q.37 →


Playing with my friends
Coloring pictures
Writing about things
[37]
Reading Stories
[38]
Working with teachers
[39]
Math
[40]
Making things, drawing, painting
[41]
P/E Sports
[42]
Working with other kids
[43]
Computers
[44]
Music & Singing
[45]
Working quietly on my own
[46]
Library
[47]

Q.55 →

Are kids nice to one another?

Yes Sometimes No

[55]

Do other kids help you learn?

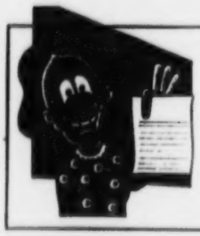
Yes Sometimes No

[56]

Is it OK to make mistakes?

Yes Sometimes No

[57]



Do teachers help kids learn?

Yes Sometimes No

[58]

Do you have lots of friends at school?

Yes Sometimes No

[59]

Thank you

Created for the Lebaron Community School District by Mary C. Dalmau, Audrey Desjarlais & Gwen Meyer · April 1997

Grades 6,7,8

Lebanon Community School District Student Survey

The answers to the questions in this survey will help us learn more about what things students like about school and what might be changed so that learning is more successful, meaningful and fun. Thanks for your thoughts!

Date ☐ Boy [A] ☐ Girl [B] ☐

What language do you speak most at home? English ☐ Other: ☐

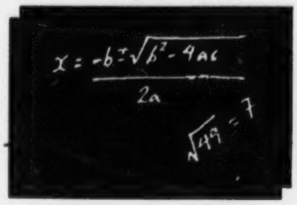
Circle your grade 6 7 8 (4) (5)

Tell us what you think about your school. Choose 3-5 words or phrases from the list below that best complete the sentences for you. Write the letter(s) of the words you choose in the circles or squares below the sentences. If you'd like to use other words that aren't on the list just write those words in the circles. You may use the same words as often as you like.

The atmosphere at my school is:
1-3 4( )

Teachers at my school are really good at:
5-7 8( )

On the whole, students at my school are:
9-11 12( )


x = -b ± √b² - 4ac / 2a
√49 = 7

The hardest thing to deal with at my school is:
13-15 16( )

The most important thing I'm learning is:
17-19 20( )

- a) academics
- b) bullying
- c) caring
- d) classes
- e) comfortable
- f) computers
- g) discipline
- h) everyday life skills
- i) extra-curricular activities
- j) fairness
- k) friendly
- l) fun
- m) getting along with others
- n) giving all kids a chance
- o) good
- p) job skills
- q) language arts
- r) math
- s) music/art
- t) P.E./sports
- u) peer pressure
- v) problem solving
- w) reading
- x) reasoning skills
- y) respect
- z) rules
- aa) safety
- bb) class schedules
- cc) science
- dd) self-direction
- ee) social activities
- ff) spending time with friends
- gg) supporting/encouraging students
- hh) successful
- ii) teaching
- jj) trying new things
- kk) uncomfortable
- ll) understanding
- mm) unfriendly
- nn) violence

I wish the teachers at my school were better at:
29-31 32( )

The things I like most about my school are:
25-27 28( )

The school could do a better job at:
21-23 24( )

Check the box that fits best for each statement.

REPORT CARD

	YES [a]	SOMETIMES [b]	NO [c]	
I feel safe at school.	☐	☐	☐	33
Teachers help everybody.	☐	☐	☐	34
Students who get in trouble get bad grades.	☐	☐	☐	35
Students help you learn.	☐	☐	☐	36
I look forward to going to school.	☐	☐	☐	37
Students do good work but don't get good grades.	☐	☐	☐	38
I can use what I learn at school in other places.	☐	☐	☐	39
Kids who get in trouble get more homework.	☐	☐	☐	40
Overall, I find classes boring.	☐	☐	☐	41
I can choose what I think is important to learn.	☐	☐	☐	42
Most teachers listen to what I say.	☐	☐	☐	43
Either I or students I know have been victims of harassment at school.	☐	☐	☐	44
Students get along with teachers.	☐	☐	☐	45
My grades reflect the work I do.	☐	☐	☐	46
If you don't dress right, you won't be very popular.	☐	☐	☐	47
Homework helps me learn.	☐	☐	☐	48
Students who do the best work get the best grades.	☐	☐	☐	49
Homework is a waste of time.	☐	☐	☐	50
When there is a problem, or students get into trouble, the school is fair.	☐	☐	☐	51

Check the box(es) that fit(s) best for each statement.

- Classroom learning is:

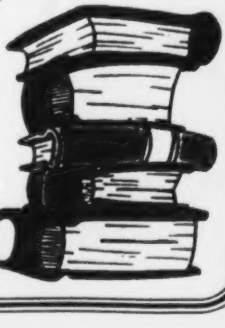
interesting	hard	fun	boring	easy
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
52	53	54	55	56

- The most important person(s) to help me be successful in school is/are:

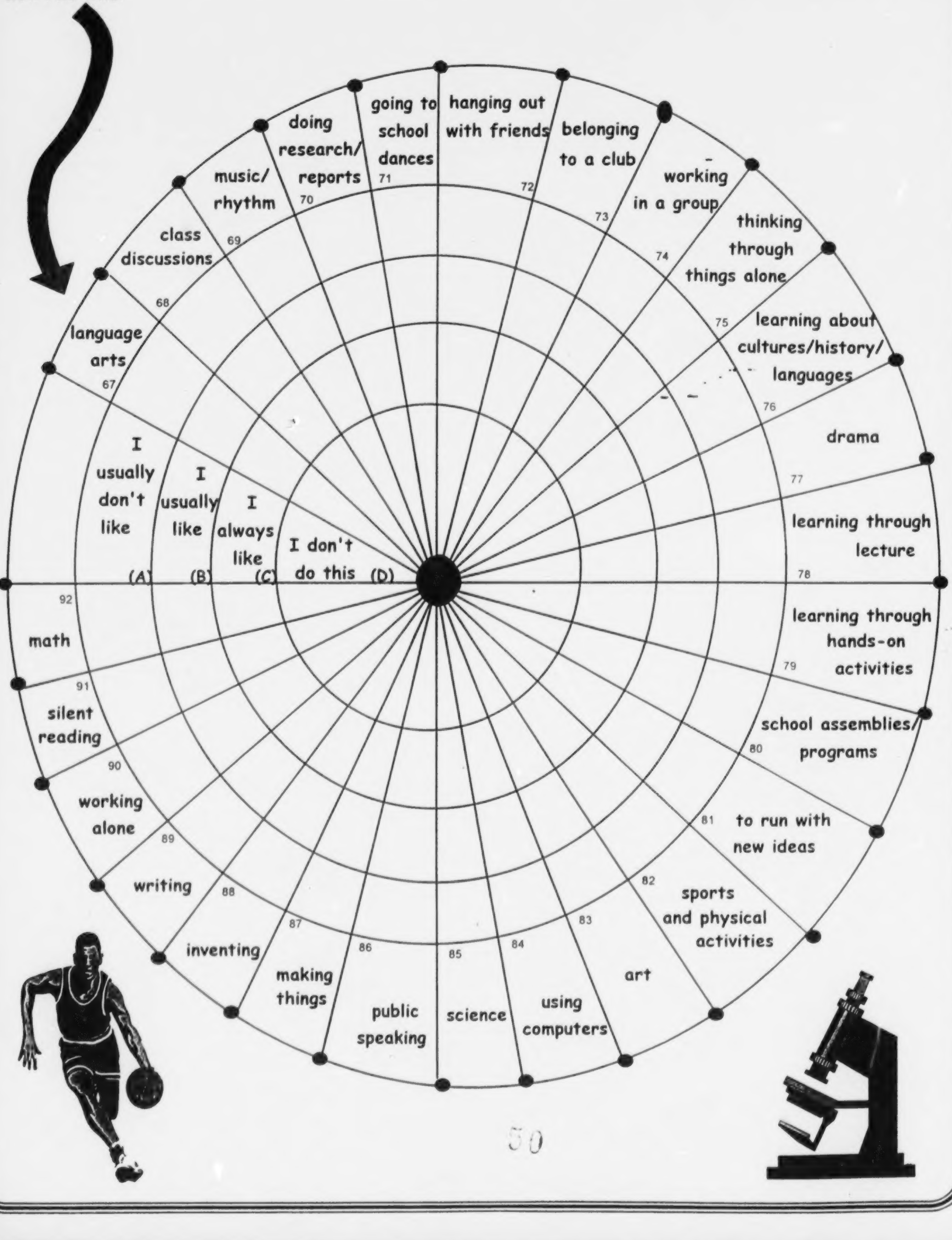
myself	my friend(s)	my parents	my teacher(s)	other
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
57	58	59	60	61

- When I need help with schoolwork I can get it easily from:

a teacher	a friend	other students	my parents	a counselor
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
62	63	64	65	66



Starting with language arts (item number 67 on the outside of the circle) and continuing around the circle to math (item number 92) use a pencil, pen or marker to shade in the segment that describes how you feel about each item, i.e., (A) I usually don't like, (B) I usually like, (C) I always like and (D) I don't do this.



I usually don't like (A)
I usually like (B)
I always like (C)
I don't do this (D)
67 language arts
68 class discussions
69 music/ rhythm
70 doing research/ reports
71 going to school dances
72 hanging out with friends
73 belonging to a club
74 working in a group
75 thinking through things alone
76 learning about cultures/history/ languages
77 drama
78 learning through lecture
79 learning through hands-on activities
80 school assemblies/ programs
81 to run with new ideas
82 sports and physical activities
83 art
84 using computers
85 science
86 public speaking
87 making things
88 inventing
89 writing
90 working alone
91 silent reading
92 math

The best thing about going to my school:

93-94

The best school activity I ever did:

95-96

The best class assignment or project I ever had:

97-98

The worst:

99-100

A class I would recommend to my friends:

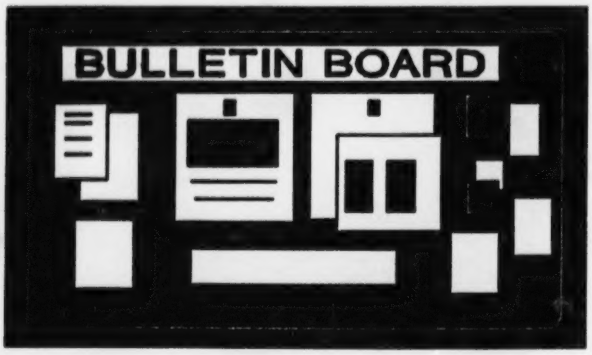
103

Why?

104-105

The most annoying rule at my school:

101-102



The best book I was assigned to read:

106

The worst:

107-108

A teacher I would recommend to my friends:

Why?

109-110

The neatest thing a teacher did at my school:

111-112

The most frustrating thing about life at my school:

113-114

Anything else you want to tell us?

115-117

Created for the Lebanon Community School District by Mary C. Dalman, Audrey Desjarlais & Gwen Meyer

Lebanon Community School District Educator Survey

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey, which was designed by a team of ten Lebanon teachers and two University of Oregon faculty. All information on the surveys will be kept confidential and will be used to aid in the District's school improvement planning.

Please circle your primary role:

General Teacher Advising/Support

Specialist Teacher Administration

Length of Service as an Educator in Lebanon schools: _____ year(s) _____ months

Name of your school: (Do not write the name of your school if you teach in one of the small schools listed below)

____

☐ **I teach in a Small School*:** (Waterloo, Sodaville, Sand Ridge, Tennessee, Gore, Crowfoot)

***If you teach in a Small School, do not identify your school by name**

Tell us what you think about the opportunities for learning and participation available to students in your school by putting the letter of the appropriate description in the box next to each area of learning:

A Students in my school *have good* opportunities to learn about/participate in:

B Students in my school have some opportunities, *but need more,* to learn about/participate in:

C Students in my school *do not have, but need,* opportunities to learn about/participate in:

D Students in my school *don't need* opportunities to learn about/particpate in:

1 _____ Athletics/sports and/or PE
2 _____ Becoming responsible citizens
3 _____ Caring for nature and the environment
4 _____ Communication-public speaking
5 _____ Computer skills
6 _____ Cooperative ways of working
7 _____ Creativity, e.g., drawing, painting, making things
8 _____ Foreign languages
9 _____ Getting along with other people
10 _____ Initiative and problem solving
11 _____ The world and the people of the world
12 _____ Becoming lifelong learners
13 _____ Mathematics
14 _____ Music
15 _____ Reading
16 _____ Science
17 _____ Self-confidence and belief in themselves
18 _____ Study skills
19 _____ Understanding work-preparation for work
20 _____ Writing

Check all the box(es) that fit(s) for each statement.

◆ When I need support in my teaching, I usually talk to:

a fellow teacher	my principal	personal friend	family member	no one
☐ 21	☐ 22	☐ 23	☐ 24	☐ 25

◆ I feel supported, praised, encouraged in my teaching by:

the district	my principal	my fellow teachers	my students	parents
☐ 26	☐ 27	☐ 28	☐ 29	☐ 30

◆ I feel that I am *not* adequately meeting the needs of the following students in my classroom:

TAG	ESL	average	SED	identified for other special services
☐ 31	☐ 32	☐ 33	☐ 34	☐ 35

Three things you do that are valued by the district: (36-38)

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Check the box that fits best for each statement.

How often:	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Don't Know	
...do you feel supported, encouraged, praised, recognized for what you do?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	39
...are parents supportive of teachers and the job they are doing?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	40
...are you able to plan with other teachers when you would like to?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	41
...do you have access to a reasonable amount of curricular materials?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	42
...do you have access to the technology you need?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	43
...do you have the training you'd like?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	44
...do you feel that the site council at your school is effective?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	45
...are you satisfied with your methods of assessment of student progress?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	46
...are you encouraged to try new teaching approaches?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	47
...are you encouraged to develop new curricular ideas/themes?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	48
...do general and special teachers plan curriculum together in your school?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	49
...do you feel that you are adequately meeting the needs of all of your students?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	50

In each of the two columns below, put a check in all of the boxes that apply:

Which strategies do you use to measure student progress?	Which strategies *actually give you helpful information* about student progress?	
51 ☐	65 ☐	grades
52 ☐	66 ☐	observation
53 ☐	67 ☐	parent/teacher conferences
54 ☐	68 ☐	performances and displays
55 ☐	69 ☐	personal contact with students
56 ☐	70 ☐	collections of evidence
57 ☐	71 ☐	report cards
58 ☐	72 ☐	student led conferences
59 ☐	73 ☐	testing
60 ☐	74 ☐	standards
61 ☐	75 ☐	benchmarks
62 ☐	76 ☐	scoring guides
63 ☐	77 ☐	student work
64 ☐	78 ☐	personal contact with parents

For each of the 4 questions below, choose from 1-5 answers from the list at the right. Put the letters of the answers you choose on the lines beneath the questions.

Which measures give parents the best information about student progress?

___ ___ ___ ___ ___
79 80 81 82 83

Which help you most with curriculum design and teaching?

___ ___ ___ ___ ___
84 85 86 87 88

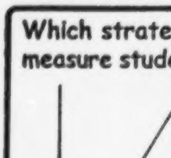
Which measures are the least helpful?

___ ___ ___ ___ ___
89 90 91 92 93

Which measures would you like to learn more about or have more help with?

___ ___ ___ ___ ___
94 95 96 97 98

a) grades
b) observation
c) parent/teacher conferences
d) performances and displays
e) personal contact with students
f) collections of evidence
g) report cards
h) student led conferences
i) testing
j) standards
k) benchmarks
l) scoring guides
m) student work
n) personal contact with parents



Comments? (99 101)

Check the circle that fits best for each statement.

Statement	Yes	No	Sometimes	Don't Know	
In general, I think the students in my school see value in their learning and can use it in their lives.	○	○	○	○	102
Parents are given enough opportunities to participate in schools.	○	○	○	○	103
Teachers in my school have adequate input about what is taught.	○	○	○	○	104
All classes in the district at similar benchmark levels should use the same curriculum.	○	○	○	○	105
On the whole, parents in the district are well-informed about school reform.	○	○	○	○	106
The workshops/inservices I attend are helpful in my teaching.	○	○	○	○	107
Students get the emotional support they need to be successful in school.	○	○	○	○	108
Parents are well-informed about the curriculum.	○	○	○	○	109
I would like to have more input into the process of curriculum adoption.	○	○	○	○	110
Students and teachers in my school feel safe.	○	○	○	○	111
My supervising administrator has enough information about what I do to evaluate my performance fairly and effectively.	○	○	○	○	112
Students have a voice in the evaluation of their progress.	○	○	○	○	113
Parents help to create IEPs.	○	○	○	○	114
Magnet schools (schools with a special focus) would be a good addition in the district.	○	○	○	○	115
Students get the behavioral support they need to be successful in school.	○	○	○	○	116
I like to be innovative in my teaching and try new things.	○	○	○	○	117
Parent input is invited in my building.	○	○	○	○	118
I have adequate time to talk to parents about the progress of their child.	○	○	○	○	119
I know all I need to know about differentiating instruction.	○	○	○	○	120
I would like to see an open enrollment policy in the district.	○	○	○	○	121
I am comfortable using scoring guides.	○	○	○	○	122
The district administration is well-informed about what goes on in schools.	○	○	○	○	123
Parent input is valued in my building.	○	○	○	○	124
I know what the site council in my building is doing.	○	○	○	○	125
Parents in my school are well-informed about student progress.	○	○	○	○	126
Schools that have good programs should be able to keep them.	○	○	○	○	127
I would like to have more opportunities to team teach.	○	○	○	○	128
All classes in the district at similar benchmark levels should use the same teaching approaches.	○	○	○	○	129
The student assessment measures I use give me helpful information.	○	○	○	○	130
I would like to have more time to plan with other teachers.	○	○	○	○	131
Resources should be equalized across the district by taking materials, technology, etc. from schools that have more and giving them to schools that have less.	○	○	○	○	132
The teachers in my building work well together.	○	○	○	○	133
The School Board is well-informed about what goes on in schools.	○	○	○	○	134

Comments? (135-137)

Three things you do that are not valued by the district: (138-140)

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2

Only one more page to go...

What do you think is a reasonable expectation for technology in your classroom?
(141-143)

For curricular materials?
(144-146)

If safety is an issue in your school, what would help to make your school safer?
(147-148)

What 3 adjectives best describe the school year so far?
(151-153)

In what areas would you like to have (more) help and/or professional development?
(154-156)

What do you like most about your job?
(157-159)

Are there any community resources (or people) that are not already being utilized that could help your school or the district?
(160-161)

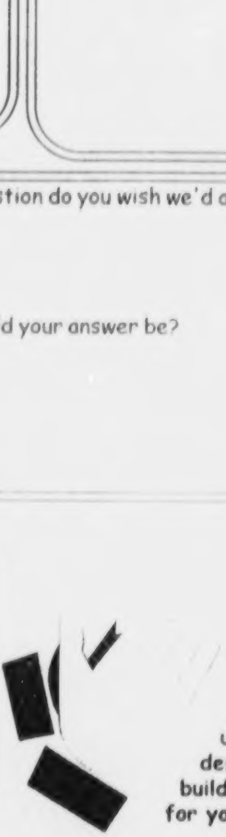
What is/are the most frustrating thing(s) about your job?
(162-164)

In which areas of your job do you feel you are having the most success?
(149-150)

What question do you wish we'd asked you but didn't?
(165)

What would your answer be?
(166)

Anything else you want to say?
(167)



You're done!

Please give your completed survey to the union representative or othe designated person in your building. And again, thank you for your time!

Created for the Lebanon Community School District by Nadia Katul Gwen Meyer & Marg C. Dolman

Harrison Elementary School
Parent Survey - Winter 1996

Thank you for taking the time to complete our survey. Your opinions and ideas will help us to work together to improve our school.

Section 1: The school community

1. **Overall impressions:** *Finish the sentences below with the 3 - 5 words (or phrases) from the box which best describe your answer. You may use the same words as often as you like. If none of the words are right for you - use your own words.*

Note: *To save time you can write the numbers of the words or phrases you choose.*

The things I like most about Harrison are......

The most important things for children are....

Our highest priorities should be ....

1) perseverance
2) cooperation
3) learning
4) order
5) energy
6) control
7) challenge
8) class-size
9) care
10) kindness
11) questioning
12) fairness
13) play
14) safety
15) creativity
16) commitment
17) music/art
18) knowledge
19) competition
20) welcome
21) success
22) math
23) collaboration
24) community
25) discipline
26) fun
27) funding
28) teaching
29) nothing
30) P.E.
31) reading
32) respect
33) understanding
34) learning-another-language
35) getting-along-with-others
36) opportunities-for-all-kids
37) parent-teacher-cooperation
38) extending-kids-talents
39) everyday-life-skills
40) Oregon-Goals-2000
41) trying-new-things
42) problem-solving
43) standards-of-behavior

The areas I would like us to do better in are ....

The things we do best are....

I think too much emphasis is placed on .....

Essential things for kids to learn are ....

In your own words tell us what you think are the most important things for students to take with them when they graduate from Harrison Elementary School....

----

2. Communication and Information:

2a) I feel that ...... *(Check one box for each item)*

	Never	Some-times	Usually	Always	This does not apply to me
• If I have a problem with school I am able to talk to a teacher about it.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
• It is easy to make contact with the administrators at Harrison.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I know what is going on in my child's (children's) classrooms	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I get all the information I need when I discuss my child's progress with the teachers.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I read all the information that comes to our home from my child's teachers.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I would like to know more about my child's learning and progress	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I know what to do to help with homework	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I am well informed about school events	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
• The information that is sent home from the office is useful	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
• I am comfortable communicating with the school office	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

2b) How do you prefer to keep in touch with school? Rate the following ways 1 - 6 (1 = prefer most; 6 = prefer least)

Mail ☐ Conferences ☐ Email Recordings ☐ Telephone ☐ Notes ☐ Personal Contact ☐

3. Participation - Working together:

Some of the ways parents can be involved are .. *(Check the box that describes your interest or involvement)*

	I'm not interested in this	I'm not interested but other parents should have the opportunity	I would like to do this	I do this sometimes	I do this often
• helping in classrooms e.g. reading, student projects.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
• site committee	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
• curriculum planning discussions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
• field trips	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
• Parent Advisory	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
• homework	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
• fundraising	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
• visiting their children's classrooms	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
• other i.e.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Anything else you want us to know?

Section 2: Teaching & learning

In this section you have five choices for each response. Rate each of the statements ...

- **# 1 - if you are PLEASED i.e.** ***"You really like the way the school does this."***
- **# 2 - if you are SATISFIED i.e.** ***"You think the school is just OK here."***
- **# 3 - if you are CONCERNED i.e.** ***"You think there are problems here."***
- **# 4 - if you are VERY CONCERNED i.e.** ***"You think the school doesn't do this well, & that there are serious problems here."***
- **# 5 - if you are not sure what to answer, or if the statement doesn't apply to you or your experience.**

1 At Harrison children are learning

a) to become readers, and lovers of books # ....
b) about their local community, and history and the world around them # ....
c) to become problem solvers # ....
d) basic reading skills # ....
e) how to work together with one another # ....
f) to understand math and to use math in their daily lives # ....
g) to be creative # ....
h) about health and well-being # ....
i) to write well and in different ways # ....
j) about computers and the place of technology in our lives # ....
k) to understand and respect one another # ....

l) other i.e. .... #.......

- **I would like to know more about teaching & learning.**

  ☐ YES ☐ NO

- **I would like to learn more about how parents can help their children with learning.**

  ☐ YES ☐ NO

- **I am particularly interested in ...**

  ....

2 Creating a successful learning environment for students

a) School rules and expectations for appropriate behavior are clear to students, teachers and parents # ....
b) Teachers make learning fun, interesting and active for students # ....
c) In general students are interested in learning # ....
d) Classes provide a disciplined learning environment # ....
e) Children are taught to work cooperatively with other students # ....
f) Children get the support they need to be successful # ....
g) Teachers deal effectively, fairly, safely, and respectfully with children when there are problems # ....
h) The atmosphere in classrooms is pleasant encouraging and warm # ....
i) Teachers tailor learning to children's individual talents, aptitudes and needs # ....
j) Children are challenged to do their best in school # ....
k) The atmosphere in the hallways, lunch areas and playgrounds is energetic, encouraging and cooperative # ....

l) Other i.e. .... #.......

- **I would like to learn more about how parents can help create conditions that support their children's learning.**

  ☐ YES ☐ NO

- **I am particularly interested in ...**

  ....

3 Student assessment and program evaluation

a) Report cards give a good idea of children's work over the term # ....
b) Students are taught to assess their own learning # ....
c) Student led conferences are a good way for parents, teachers and students to review learning together # ....
d) Assessment practices at different grade levels are consistent # ....
e) Student portfolios (comparative samples of each child's work over the term) are a good way to review student's progress # ....
f) Parents have a good picture of the overall programs and approaches at Harrison # ....

g) Other i.e .... #.......

- **I would like to know more about assessment.**

  ☐ YES ☐ NO

- **I am particularly interested in ...**

  ....

PLAN
For the Future

Section 3: Opportunities for Harrison

What other ways could parents help out at the school and/or work with the Site Committee?

What local resources or people we are not already using could help our school?

If you had 3 wishes what would you wish for Harrison Elementary School

In conclusion, tell us about yourself & your family

Draw a line through the phrases which are NOT true for you, or your family

We have lived in Cottage Grove for more than 5 years.
When I was a child I loved school. I attended school in Oregon.
I visited my child's classroom last term.
My kids come to school on the bus. We have a computer at home.
When I was a child I was unhappy at school.
I often help with homework for more than half an hour per night.
I feel welcome when I visit the school. We speak mainly Spanish at home.
We have lived in Cottage Grove for less than 2 years.
The kids use the computer mainly to play games.
We speak mainly English at home. The kids use the computer for school work.
My kids watch TV for more than 3 hours most days.
We speak both English & Spanish at home.
We don't usually help our kids with homework.
My children play sports on the weekend.

Tell us about the special gifts & talents of your children?

Age	Gifts & talents

How many children who live in your home ...

⇒ Attend Harrison Elementary School?
Girls # .... Boys # ....
⇒ Receive special education assistance and have an IEP? # ......

Do one or more of your children find school stressful? Why?

Mary C Dalmau, Schools Projects, College of Education, University of Oregon, January, 1996

ATTACHMENT II

- **Selected Articles**
  (Additional articles are available upon request)

The Real Challenge of Inclusion

Confessions of a 'Rabid Inclusionist'

BY DIANNE L. FERGUSON

The new challenge of inclusion is to create schools in which our day-to-day efforts no longer assume that a particular text, activity, or teaching mode will "work" to support any particular student's learning, Ms. Ferguson avers.

ABOUT A YEAR ago, a colleague told me that my work was constrained by the fact that "everyone" thought I was a "rabid inclusionist." I was not exactly sure what he meant by "rabid inclusionist" or how he and others had arrived at the conclusion that I was one. I also found it somewhat ironic to be so labeled since I had been feeling uncomfortable with the arguments and rhetoric of both the anti-inclusionists and, increasingly, many of the inclusionists. My own efforts to figure out how to achieve "inclusion" — at least as I understood it — were causing me to question many of the assumptions and arguments of both groups.

In this article, I wish to trace the journey that led me to a different understanding of inclusion. I'll also describe the challenges I now face — and that I think

---

DIANNE L. FERGUSON is an associate professor in the College of Education, University of Oregon, Eugene.

Illustration by John Berry

Unfortunately, neither integration nor inclusion offered much practical guidance to teachers who were engaged in the daily dynamics of teaching and learning in classrooms with these diverse students. The focus on the right to access did not provide clear direction for achieving learning outcomes in general education settings. Essentially, both of these reform efforts challenged the logic of attaching services to places — in effect challenged the idea of a continuum of services. However, the absence of clear directions for how services would be delivered instead and the lack of information about what impact such a change might have on general education led some proponents to emphasize the importance of social rather than learning outcomes, especially for students with severe disabilities.[2] This emphasis on social outcomes certainly did nothing to end the debates.

Inclusion as 'Pretty Good' Integration

The inclusion initiative has generated a wide range of outcomes — some exciting and productive, others problematic and unsatisfying. As our son finished his official schooling and began his challenging journey to adult life, he enjoyed some quite successful experiences, one as a real member of a high school drama class, though he was still officially assigned to a self-contained classroom.[3] Not only did he learn to "fly," trusting others to lift him up and toss him in the air (not an easy thing for someone who has little control over his body), but he also memorized lines and delivered them during exams, learned to interact more comfortably and spontaneously with classmates and teachers, and began using more and different vocal inflections than had ever before characterized his admittedly limited verbal communications. Classmates, puzzled and perhaps put off by him at the beginning of the year, creatively incorporated him into enough of their improvisations and activities to be able to nominate him at the end of the year not only as one of the students who had shown progress, but also as one who showed promise as an actor. He didn't garner enough votes to win the title, but that he was nominated at all showed the drama teacher "how much [the other students] came to see him as a *member* of the class."

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can only continue to focus everyone's attention on a small number of students and a small number of student differences, rather than on the whole group of students with their various abilities and needs.

Inclusion isn't about eliminating the continuum of placements[6] or even just about eliminating some locations on the continuum,[7] though that will be one result. Nor is it about discontinuing the services that used to be attached to the various points on that continuum.[8] Instead, a more *systemic* inclusion — one that merges the reform and restructuring efforts of general education with special education inclusion — will disassociate the delivery of supports from *places* and make the full continuum of supports available to the full range of students. A more systemic inclusion will replace old practices (which presumed a relationship between ability, service, and place of delivery) with new kinds of practice (in which groups of teachers work together to provide learning supports for all students).

Inclusion isn't about time either. Another continuing debate involves whether "all" students should spend "all" of their time in general education classrooms.[9] One form of this discussion relies largely on extreme examples of "inappropriate" students: "Do you really mean that the student in a coma should be in a general education classroom? What about the student who holds a teacher hostage at knife point?" Other forms of this argument seek to emphasize the inappropriateness of the general education classroom for some students: "Without one-to-one specialized instruction the student will not learn and his or her future will be sacrificed." Another version of the same argument points out that the resources of the general education classroom are already limited, and the addition of resource-hungry students will only further reduce what is available for regular education students.

Of course these arguments fail to note that labeled students are not always the most resource-hungry students. Indeed, when some students join general education classrooms, their need for resources diminishes. In other instances, the labeled student can bring additional resources that can be shared to other classmates' benefit. These arguments also fail to note that the teaching in self-contained settings, as well as the resource management, can sometimes be uninspired, ordinary, and ineffective. Consider how many students with IEPs end up with exactly the same goals and objectives from year to year.

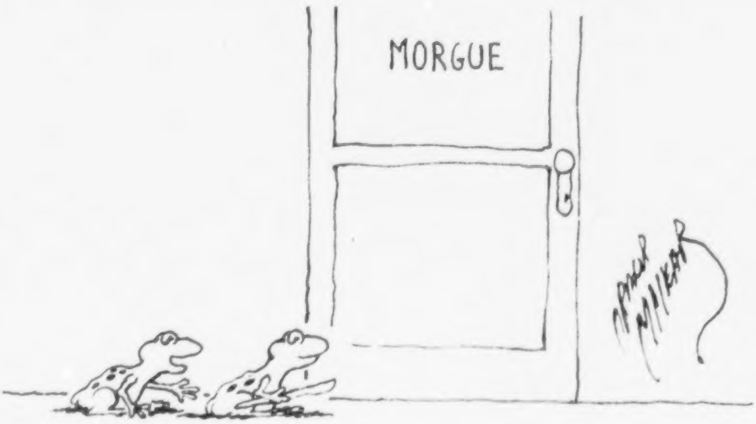
Like the debates about place, debates about time miss the point and overlook the opportunity of a shift from special education inclusion to more systemic inclusion. *Every* child should have the opportunity to learn in lots of different places — in small groups and large, in classrooms, in hallways, in libraries, and in a wide variety of community locations. For some parts of their schooling, some students might spend more time than others in some settings. Still, the greater the number and variety of students learning in various locations with more varied approaches and innovations, the less likely that any student will be disadvantaged by not "qualifying" for some kind of attention, support, or assistance. If all students work in a variety of school and community places, the likelihood that any particular students will be stigmatized because of their learning needs, interests, and preferences will be eliminated. All students will benefit from such variety in teaching approaches, locations, and supports.

The Real Challenge of Inclusion

Coming to understand the limits of inclusion as articulated by special educators was only part of my journey. I also had to spend time in general education classrooms, listening to teachers and trying to understand their struggles and efforts to change, to help me see the limits of general education as well. The general education environment, organized as it still is according to the bell curve logic of labeling and grouping by ability, may never be accommodating enough to achieve the goals of inclusion, even if special educators and their special ideas, materials, and techniques become less "special" and separate.

It seems to me that the lesson to be learned from special education's inclusion initiative is that the real challenge is a lot harder and more complicated than we thought. Neither special nor general education alone has either the capacity or the vision to challenge and change the deep-rooted assumptions that separate and track children and youths according to presumptions about ability, achievement, and eventual social contribution. Meaningful change will require nothing less than a joint effort to reinvent schools to be more accommodating to all dimensions of human diversity. It will also require that the purposes and processes of these reinvented schools be organized not so much to make sure that students learn and develop on the basis of their own abilities and talents, but rather to make sure that all children are prepared to participate in the benefits of their communities so that others in that community care enough about what happens to them to value them as members.[10]

My own journey toward challenging these assumptions was greatly assisted by the faculty of one of the elementary



"Give me that scalpel, Herb. I want some payback."

about many things. (Perhaps it would be more accurate to say that I have not so much "changed" my mind as "clarified" and expanded my thinking.) I am still an advocate for inclusion, but now I understand it to mean much more than I believed it meant when I first began to study and experience it through my son. As I and others who share this broader understanding work to create genuinely inclusive schools, we will be encouraging people in schools, on every strand of the complex web, to change in three directions.

The first shift involves moving away from schools that are structured and organized according to ability and toward schools that are structured around student diversity and that accommodate many different ways of organizing students for learning. This shift will also require teachers with different abilities and talents to work together to create a wide array of learning opportunities.[14]

The second shift involves moving away from teaching approaches that emphasize the teacher as disseminator of content that students must retain and toward approaches that emphasize the role of the learner in creating knowledge, competence, and the ability to pursue further learning. There is a good deal of literature that seeks to blend various theories of teaching and learning into flexible and creative approaches that will accomplish these ends. The strength of these approaches is that they begin with an appreciation of student differences that can be stretched comfortably to incorporate the differences of disability and the effective teaching technology created by special educators.[15]

The third shift involves changing our view of the schools' role from one of providing educational *services* to one of providing educational *supports* for learning. This shift will occur naturally as a consequence of the changes in teaching demanded by diversity. Valuing diversity and difference, rather than trying to change or diminish it so that everyone fits some ideal of similarity, leads to the realization that we can *support* students in their efforts to become active members of their communities. No longer must the opportunity to participate in life wait until some standard of "normalcy" or similarity is reached. A focus on the support of learning also encourages a shift from viewing difference or disability in terms of individual limitations to a focus on environmental constraints. Perhaps the most important feature of support as a concept for schooling is that it is grounded in the perspective of the person receiving it, not the person providing it.[16]

The new challenge of inclusion is to create schools in which our day-to-day efforts no longer assume that a particular text, activity, or teaching mode will "work" to support any particular student's learning. Typical classrooms will include students with more and more kinds of differences. The learning enterprise of reinvented *inclusive* schools will be a constant conversation involving students, teachers, other school personnel, families, and community members, all working to construct learning, to document accomplishments, and to adjust supports. About this kind of inclusion I can be very rabid indeed.

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FROM "SPECIAL" EDUCATORS TO EDUCATORS: THE CASE FOR MIXED ABILITY GROUPS OF TEACHERS IN RESTRUCTURED SCHOOLS

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As we approach the end of the century, our schools, like society in general, struggle to anticipate the changes that will be demanded of the next millennium. Recommendations abound and teachers in today's schools feel a constant pressure to change that all too often leaves them bewildered and beleaguered (Fullan, 1996). Teachers are being asked to re-examine how and what they teach. Administrators and school boards are experimenting with new management systems in the face of constantly decreasing resources. University educators attempt to refocus their research and theories to better describe and explain effective teaching and learning as students and teachers experience it in these changing schools. Daily reports in the media urge more and more changes in all aspects of schooling, for all types of students and teachers. At the same time, students are more diverse than ever before — in cultural background, learning styles and interests, social and economic class, ability, and disability. Broadly speaking, however, there are three strands of reforms currently challenging teachers in schools. The first two emerge from "general" education, the third from "special" education.

From a broad national and federal policy level, there is much discussion aimed at making schools more effective in terms of how many students complete school and how well they do on achievement measures (United States Department of Education, 1994). Indeed, one aspect of this "top down" reform strand is a call for new, higher, national achievement standards; the tests to measure students' accomplishment of these new standards, and the consistent use of consequences when standards are not met (Center for Policy Research, 1996; Gandal, 1995; McLaughlin, Shepard & O'Day, 1995; Waters, Burger & Burger, 1995). While there are other features to this broad government-initiated reform strand, increased standards and new more consistent national testing stand out as major themes and are echoing in state reform legislation, district directives and teacher staff room conversations.

At the same time, elementary and secondary teachers increasingly experiment with new curricular and teaching approaches that emphasize students' mastery not just of facts and basic academic skills, but also students' mastery of essential thinking skills like problem-solving, analysis, collaboration, and experimentation. Encouraged by business and industry (Carnevale, Gainer, & Meltzer, 1990), various state reform legislation, recommendations of a growing number of educational associations, and some strands of educational research, teachers try to expand their agendas to ensure that students not only learn, but are able to use their learning in their lives outside of school (Conley, 1993; Eisner, 1991; Sarason, 1995; Wasley, 1994). One additional feature to this second major strand of reform is to enable students to acquire an understanding and appreciation for their own learning so that they might better pursue learning in the variety of situations the changing society is likely to present to them throughout their lives and long after their formal public schooling is over.

Thirdly, within special education the long familiar discussions about where our "special," usually remediation-oriented teaching, should occur — the "mainstreaming" or "regular education initiative" debates (e.g., Biklen, Ferguson, & Ford, 1989; Gartner & Lipsky, 1987; Goodlad & Lovitt, 1993; Rogers, 1993; Skrtic, 1991; Stainback & Stainback, 1992; Villa & Thousand, 1995) — are gradually being replaced by renewed calls for integration and inclusion. The civil rights logic of integration, that focused more on an end to segregation than any particularly detailed educational alternative, has now been expanded to focus not just on where children with disabilities should **not** be educated, but where they **should** be educated (general education classrooms and activities) and to what end (full learning & social membership) (Baker, Wang, & Walberg, 1994; Berres, Ferguson, Knoblock, & Wood, 1996; Ferguson, 1995; McLaughlin, 1995; NASBE, 1992; NASBE, 1995; Sailor, Gee, & Karosoff, 1993).

In response to the pressure of these three reform strands, and despite ongoing debates, three results are becoming evident. First, classroom diversity in general education increasingly includes the diversity of disability along with race, culture, learning style, intelligences, personal preferences, socioeconomic class, and family and community priorities. When asked to identify changes in education over the last five years, any group of educators will quickly identify increasing student diversity near the top of the list. Teachers seem quite clear that the "norm", if it every really existed in the untidy worlds of schools, has nearly disappeared as a useful construct for the design of learning and management of classrooms (Pugach & Seidl, 1995; Putnam, Speigel, & Bruininks, 1995).

A second result of various educational reforms is that separate special education classrooms and schools are gradually decreasing in number. Although national educational statistics and reports continue to show dramatic variation in this result from state to state (Davis, 1994; United States Department of Education, 1995), the shift to more options for labeled students seems well established. As a consequence of both these shifts, the third result is a shift in the role and daily duties of special educators. They are shifting from classroom teachers to a variety of specialist, support, consultative, and generally itinerant roles. These changes are the focus of this chapter because regardless of the position one takes on inclusion, or any other of the current reforms in American public schooling, the shifting roles are real for an increasing number of both special and general educators.

We have organized our analysis of these changing roles to explore first the logic presented in much of the special education reform literature for these changes. Second, we briefly present the results of our own research (Cameron, 1994; Ferguson, Ralph, Cameron, Katul, in review; Katul, 1995;) with special educators exploring these changes in role. Third, we will analyze the limits of special educators' changing roles and propose an alternative. Finally, we will explore the implications of our alternative for students with disabilities in schools, for our changing educational policies regarding special education, for teacher education, and for teachers' continuing professional development.

From Special Educator to Inclusion Specialist

For some advocates of inclusion the emergence of the new role represents movement toward merging the parallel systems of general and special education into

> a single unified system of public education that incorporates all children and youth as active, fully participating members of the school community; that views diversity as the norm; and that ensures a high-quality education for each student by providing meaningful curriculum, effective teaching, and necessary supports for each student (Ferguson, 1995, p. 286).

For others, this shift in role threatens a loss of tradition, status, influence, and the very core of what makes special education "special". That special core involves being able to bring highly specialized and technical teaching approaches to individual students in order to attenuate, and sometimes repair, highly individual and idiosyncratic differences in cognitive functioning and learning accomplishments (e.g. Gallagher, 1994; Zigmond, 1995). Regardless of the position one takes, however, the shifting roles are fact for an increasing number of special educators.

Descriptions of the roles and responsibilities of "inclusion specialists" vary as do the titles assigned this new role. Sometimes called "integration specialists" or "support facilitators," or even "inclusion teachers," the most consistent themes for these professionals are to be coordinators, developers and organizers of supports for students and teachers in inclusive settings. (Stainback, S, Stainback, W., and Harris, 1989; Tashie, et al., 1993; Villa & Thousand, 1995). In an earlier publication we described them as adapters of curriculum and brokers of resources (Ferguson, et al., 1993). Others emphasize being a "team member", or a "provider of technical assistance" (e.g., Sailor, Gee, & Karasoff, 1993; Van Dyke, Stallings, & Colley, 1995; Villa & Thousand, 1995).

Our more recent research with 19 teachers in this role turned up sixteen different titles – some new, some old – being used by educators who defined themselves as exploring this role (Cameron, 1994; Ferguson, Ralph, Katul, Cameron, in review; Katul, 1995). A quick glance at the list in Table 1 confirms the major themes found in the descriptions of the inclusion specialist role by proponents. First, the role is supposed to be less about working with students and more about working with grownups. Most examples include the specifically teacher-oriented language of "consultant," "specialist" or "facilitator". Only the "Teacher of Inclusion" example seems unclear about the recipient of the role's activities. Second, special educators serving in a wide variety of roles seem to be assuming these responsibilities: in some cases, inclusion support is added to the duties of the Chapter 1 teacher, in others the Special Education Director. In the interest of brevity, we will continue to use the term "inclusion specialist" to capture this role because it seems to us to best capture the various recommendations in the literature.

Table 1: Job Titles in Use

- ✓ Support Specialist
- ✓ Supported Education Consultant
- ✓ Instruction Facilitator
- ✓ Supported Education Specialist
- ✓ District Learning SPED Facilitator
- ✓ Inclusion Teacher
- ✓ Handicapped Learner Teacher
- ✓ Teacher of Inclusion
- ✓ Teacher Consultant
- ✓ District SPED Coordinator
- ✓ SPED Chapter 1 Coordinator
- ✓ Education Service District Supervisor
- ✓ Collaboration Consultant
- ✓ Supported Education Consultant/Autism Specialist
- ✓ Educational Specialist
- ✓ SPED Director

The New Role in Theory

As inclusion reforms have spread, a literature has emerged describing the features and duties of the inclusion specialist (e.g., Ferguson & Ralph, (in press); Stainback & Stainback, 1990; Stainback, Stainback, & Harris, 1989; Tashie, et al., 1993). One recommended prerequisite for the role is that the person be knowledgeable about available supports and resources for students with disabilities assigned to general education classrooms. An important responsibility of the specialist is to get resources and supports to other members of the school community. A second responsibility, and value, is that the inclusion specialist's work should be "consumer driven." That is, the requests and needs of students, parents, and teachers should direct the allocation and provision of supports and resources. Being flexible enough to be consumer driven requires the specialist to be familiar with classroom routines and curricula, knowledgeable about students' learning styles and preferences, and aware of family priorities so that their advice and assistance is maximally useful. Finally, inclusion specialists are advised to be flexible and "fade" their support when it is no longer needed. Proponents' expectations are that as teachers and students become more adept at supporting each other, more natural support networks will emerge, diminishing the need for an official inclusion specialist. Through all this, the specialist is further advised to act as a "team member" rather than an expert or supervisor in order to encourage and model an atmosphere of unity and cooperation (Givner & Haager, 1995; Pugach, 1995; Stainback & Stainback, 1990; Tashie, et. al., 1993; Villa & Thousand, 1995; Warger & Pugach, 1996).

The picture drawn of this role, and the reasons for it, seems to be that including students with disabilities into general education classrooms will make everyone uncomfortable for awhile. Students and teachers alike are simply unfamiliar with children and youth with disabilities and initial contact is bound to be discomforting, the logic goes on. However, the discomfort will pass and the specialist's role is to provide "resources and supports" in the interim. Exactly what constitutes "resources and supports" cannot be very clearly specified since their identification and delivery should be "consumer driven". This very effort to be non-prescriptive may have contributed to some early dissatisfaction with the way various individuals interpreted the role, and certainly contributed to our questions. According to Stainback and Stainback (1990), for example,

> When facilitators were first used in schools, they were generally employed to work only with students classified with disabilities. They often followed or shadowed these students around in regular class and school settings. This tended to draw attention to and set such students apart from their peers, interfering with the development of natural supports or friendships (p. 33 - 34).

As a consequence, inclusion specialists are now encouraged to support all students in the classroom rather than focus on certain labeled students so that, from a student's point of view at least, all grownups are teachers, no longer labeled by their expertise (Ferguson, et. al., 1993). Yet even recent educational and informational videos seeking to illustrate the best available inclusion practices (e.g., Dover, 1994; Goodwin & Wurzburg, 1993; NY Partnership for Statewide Systems Change Project, 1995; Thompson, 1991) are peppered with phrases like "these special students" or "my inclusion students", suggesting that both general and special educators struggle still with students, tasks, and responsibilities.

Apparent contradictions between the inclusion specialist as envisioned by reformers and as experienced by teachers prompted our further investigation. How much has the role of inclusion specialist actually evolved towards serving all students? Does "serving all students" mean that the need for the specialist's resources and supports will in fact not fade as everyone becomes more comfortable with a new "inclusion student"? Or, is the strategy of "working with all students" just a tactic to disguise the extra resources and attention afforded labeled students so as to reduce stigmatizing them during this period of adjustment? Is the role really needed or just an administrative strategy for using special educators who no longer have classrooms? Can schools really be organized to educate all students without labeling either students or teachers given current federal and state laws and policies?

The New Role in Reality

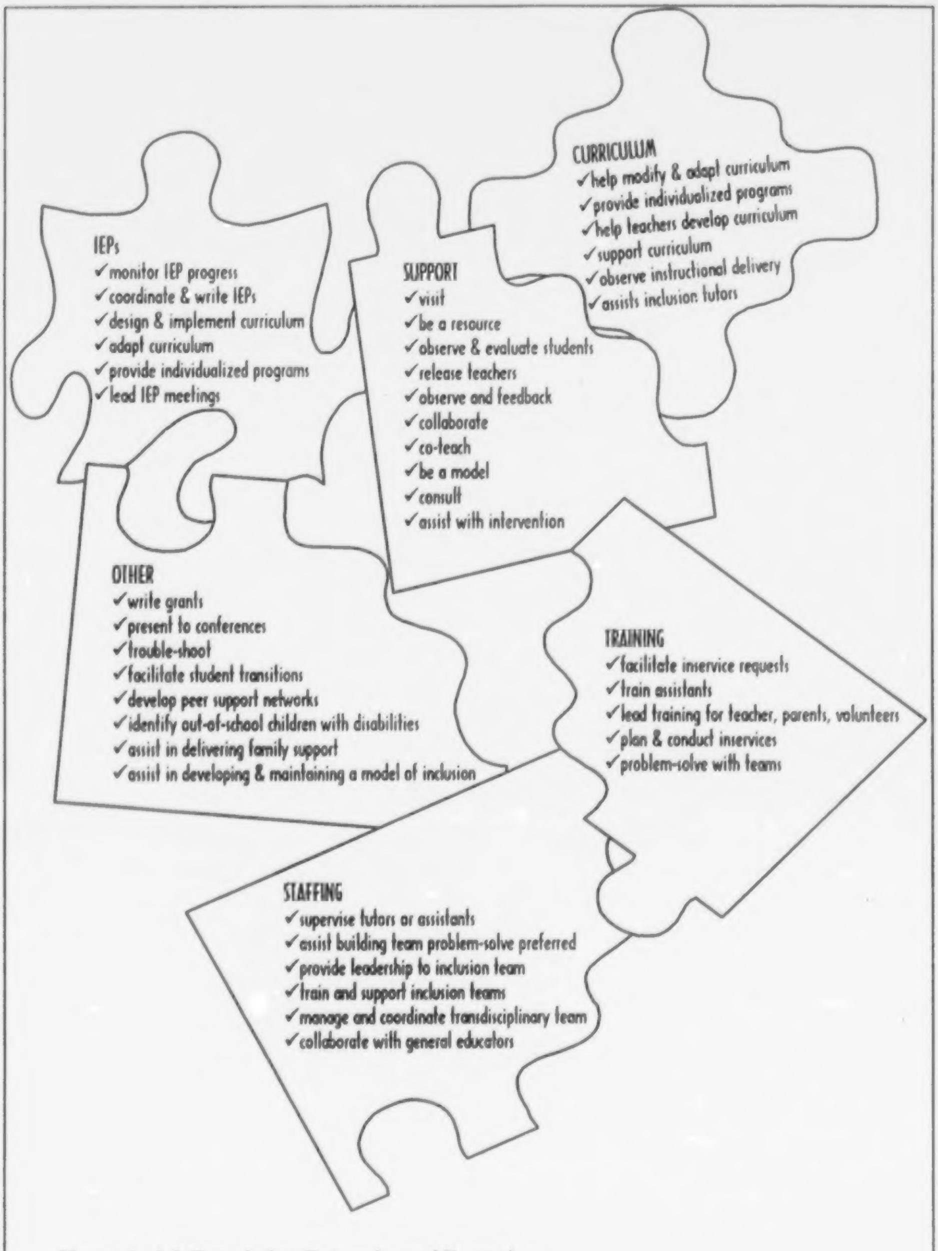
Our own research involved interviews with 19 teachers who understood themselves to be taking on the responsibilities of the inclusion specialist role. In addition to hour long interviews (in most cases), we shadowed eight of the inclusion specialists during a typical day's routine. These observations carefully logged the minutes each spent in five tasks: (1) driving, (2) pulling students out or aside for instruction, (3) teaching or observing in general education classrooms, (4) talking with teachers and/or parents, and (5) doing paperwork, phone calls, and other desk work. We also interviewed seven general educators who worked with several of the inclusion specialists we had interviewed earlier, although some of these interviews were briefer. Finally, we collected job descriptions, when they existed, for the 19 specialists we interviewed as well as schedules and appointment records in order to expand our understanding of how inclusion specialists spent their time.

Perhaps not surprisingly, all the inclusion specialists we interviewed were special educators. All had been trained as special educators, and eleven had spent at least part of their careers as teachers in self-contained classrooms. Two others had experience as resource room teachers and two had spent some time as general educators. Nine had spent at least part of their career in some kind of specialist/consultant role to general educators before assuming duties as an inclusion specialist, and two had completed initial teacher preparation in special education and immediately assumed roles as inclusion specialists. A common career pattern was to begin as a self-contained classroom teacher and then move to a special education specialist role of some sort before becoming an inclusion specialist. The two general educators left the classroom to become either self contained or consulting special educators.

Interestingly, of the 19 inclusion specialists, only five had current job descriptions specific to the role. Ten either had no job description at all or had job descriptions that were being revised. Four were working under their old job descriptions as self-contained classroom teachers – nothing to do with their current role. Perhaps the status of these changing job descriptions is simply an artifact of the newness of the role. Still, that explanation, while at least partly true, does not entirely explain these three comments made during interviews:

- *There is no job description in place, and I don't expect one soon.*
- *My responsibilities change every year. It is just sort of up to me to figure out what to do. . . through trial and error.*
- *It doesn't describe what I* ***actually*** *do, but rather, what I* ***would*** *do if I had the time.*

The job descriptions that did exist outlined five areas of activity, along with the ever-necessary category of "other." Figure 1 briefly summarizes the range and variety of tasks within (1) support, (2) curriculum, (3) IEPs, (4) staffing, and (5) training others, plus (6) other. Notice how "support" gets elaborated across these job descriptions. Also notice that some of the support activities are relatively benign, like visiting classrooms, releasing teachers and "being a resource". Others have a more hierarchical flavor, like "observing and evaluating students, "consulting," "being a model," and "observing and providing feedback." A few suggest equality in the adult-adult relationship through co-teaching, collaborating, or assisting with interventions.


CURRICULUM
✓help modify & adapt curriculum
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✓assists inclusion tutors
IEPs
✓monitor IEP progress
✓coordinate & write IEPs
✓design & implement curriculum
✓adapt curriculum
✓provide individualized programs
✓lead IEP meetings
SUPPORT
✓visit
✓be a resource
✓observe & evaluate students
✓release teachers
✓observe and feedback
✓collaborate
✓co-teach
✓be a model
✓consult
✓assist with intervention
OTHER
✓write grants
✓present to conferences
✓trouble-shoot
✓facilitate student transitions
✓develop peer support networks
✓identify out-of-school children with disabilities
✓assist in delivering family support
✓assist in developing & maintaining a model of inclusion
TRAINING
✓facilitate inservice requests
✓train assistants
✓lead training for teacher, parents, volunteers
✓plan & conduct inservices
✓problem-solve with teams
STAFFING
✓supervise tutors or assistants
✓assist building team problem-solve preferred
✓provide leadership to inclusion team
✓train and support inclusion teams
✓manage and coordinate transdisciplinary team
✓collaborate with general educators

Figure 1: Job Description Categories and Examples

The job description components also reveal a kind of split personality. On the one hand, inclusion specialists are charged with teaching and supervising other adults, leading meetings and teams, and helping teachers to design and deliver curriculum and teaching. On the other hand, they're also directed to teach and monitor students through the development of IEPs, adapting curriculum and teaching, and the provision of individualized programs. Even though we've collapsed together the components of several job descriptions, we found this split personality feature within each of our examples

Left with the limited assistance of changing or missing job descriptions (for those that had any at all, of course), we found the inclusion specialists drew upon their own experiences, abilities, and preferences to create three quite different roles, which we have described as: (1) the "teacher with an empty classroom", (2) the "teacher without a classroom" and (3) the "teacher of teachers." While many of the inclusion specialists we interviewed talked about a broader role of "educational consultant" – someone who works with all students – none really found themselves able to accomplish the role.

Of course, none of the inclusion specialists we interviewed fit precisely into one of these roles. Most did an amazing array of tasks and activities that reflected features of all of the roles. In fact, some were quite explicit about the constantly changing nature of what they were doing. Leo, for example, explained to us

> *You are constantly trying to define your role --- trying to define what that role is in every single situation. Every time you go to a meeting you have to define your role. . . . I'm a "troubleshooter", "mediator", "negotiator", "problem-solver", and "consultant."*

"And all that just before noon," we expected him to add. Still, in most cases one of the roles tended to dominate. We will describe each of the roles through a composite teacher that combines the experiences of the inclusion specialists we interviewed for whom the role dominated. Of course, our references to schools and towns are also constructed from the composite experiences of the teachers we interviewed.

Ben: A "Teacher with an Empty Classroom"

After receiving his initial special education license and a Master's degree in special education, Ben was hired almost immediately as a resource room teacher at McKenzie Middle School. Ben provided supplemental and remedial instruction in math, reading and language arts to students designated "learning disabled" in his fully equipped classroom. After his first year, however, the school district decided to adopt a more inclusive model for providing special education services and decided to stop using resource rooms for pull out instruction. Suddenly, Ben found he had a new title, a new role, and an empty classroom.

As a new "inclusion specialist", Ben's job description specified that his primary responsibilities were to provide modified and adapted instruction for "included students" in general education classrooms. He was also directed to monitor their progress on IEP goals and objectives and model appropriate teaching methods for the general education teachers - at least with regard to the students with disabilities. Encouraged by the principal and with the cooperation of several teachers, Ben moved his instruction out of the resource room. Now Ben's classroom shelves were filled with teacher's manuals and curriculum materials and the walls papered with inspirational posters and signs instead of student work.

But Ben and his students found the transition difficult. With little joint planning time, Ben and the general educators decided that the needs of his students would be best met if they were gathered together into small groups when Ben could come to the classroom. As chairperson and primary author of all the students' IEPs, Ben was naturally more familiar with students' needs. So in the end, Ben transferred the materials and skills he had always used in the resource *room to create separate instruction for the "included" students in each of their assigned general education classrooms, remaining responsible for much of their education.*

> *In our school the classroom teacher is the case manager. They are the ones who know supposedly what the kid needs and where they are going. I am just a resource. . . .But under the law, someone needs to be there watching what's happening. I am simply the district watchdog. I can't leave it because sometimes if you leave it up to people who don't know the law, who aren't qualified to know, then we have problems. And so if I see problems, or hear about problems, I step in to problem solve. . . They are still my kids.*
>
> *I have some groups in which I teach kids reading and math directly and I handle a large bulk of the paperwork. . .I attend the meetings for the children that I serve and I also provide consultation through the building [when there are] behavioral or academic concerns. I have periods when I can go observe and provide support – give the teacher a break for instance.*

After a relatively short time, however, Ben and several of the general education teachers decided that trying to teach their separate groups at the same time in the same room was not working well. They, and the students, they believed, were distracted by each other. Besides, Ben now had so many different schedules to keep that sometimes he was late or came early and teachers weren't ready for him. The logistics seemed too difficult, so Ben began to pull students out into the hall or another room, and even into his old empty resource room.

> *I would like to do more of what we call "push-in". . .I would like to go into more classrooms and be with the classroom teacher. I don't want them to leave when I come in.*

Joni: A "Teacher Without a Classroom"

Before becoming an inclusion specialist, Joni worked as an educational assistant in a resource room for students with learning disabilities. After earning a teaching license to work with students with moderate and severe disabilities, she began teaching in a self-contained classroom that served more significantly disabled students from several surrounding towns. She and her 9-12 students spent their days in a classroom tucked away at the end of a hall in Alder Elementary. Two full-time educational assistants provided most of the actual instruction that Joni had designed, leaving her able to supervise their teaching, organize and manage everyone's schedules and manage paperwork.

Worried that she was still not adequately addressing her students' learning and social needs, she convinced the principal to let her integrate her students into general education classrooms for parts of their day. With little fanfare, students began attending P.E., art, and music classes with their nondisabled peers. Soon, however, Joni started worrying that things still were not working the way she'd hoped. Even though one of her assistants accompanied students to their general ed classes, the students didn't seem to be making friends or meeting the expectations of the general education teachers. Instead, the teachers pretty much left the students alone, expecting the assistants to teach as best they could.

Given her experiences, Joni was excited when her district decided to reassign her students to schools in their home communities. As the district emptied Joni's classroom, they *created a new "inclusion teacher" position that Joni seemed perfect for. Joni had some experience integrating students into general education classrooms, she was interested in achieving better inclusion, and had a special education background in IEP writing and curriculum modification that the district believed would be needed by someone in the inclusion specialist role.*

As the "inclusion teacher," Joni now has more students and more assistants (though now called "inclusion tutors") to schedule, coordinate and manage not only across all the classrooms at Alder Elementary but also across several other schools. She must also continue to design instruction for the assistants to deliver in the general education classrooms where unfamiliar and uncertain teachers are eager to have her presence for help and support.

Her carefully orchestrated schedule is a masterpiece, but frequently unravels as little things happen — like a student's mood, an assistant's health, or a classroom teacher's decision to change the lesson. The day we visited her began with a call from a sick tutor, prompting Joni to complain,

> *Actually, the coverage is so tough. . . .I find myself going to a school for fifteen minutes just to give the inclusion tutor a break. . . .Coverage is a problem. It seems like I am always looking for somebody to cover for something.*

Joni is everywhere at once and feels like she is accomplishing less than ever. Take John. He is six years old and his squeals could be heard as we approached the resource room. A couple of doors along the hallway closed softly in response to the noise. Joni walked in and went directly to John, passing the two adults in the room. At first I could only see the top of his head over the standing dividers that surrounded him in the corner of the room. His squeals grew a little louder and consistent as Joni spoke to him in a warm familiar voice. . . .

After 10 minutes getting John focused on playing with some puzzles, Joni's questions "How is Johnny doing today? Anything I need to know about?" were met with an uncomfortable silence and exchanged glances between the educational assistant and the resource room teacher. It turned out that they thought the picture communication board Joni designed was too difficult to use consistently, partly because John was in the kindergarten classroom for some of the day where there was no board. Joni stressed the importance of the board and began modeling how to use it with John.

After a bit Joni took John outside to play, though the other kindergartners would not have recess for at least an hour. It turned out, however, that according to Joni, John "rarely" played with the other kids during recess anyway. In fact, John's inclusion was dictated by the various adults responsible for coordinating schedules between the resource room and kindergarten classroom. The teachers didn't always know when Joni would arrive, requiring them to switch gears unexpectedly. As a consequence John often had stretches of "down time" when whatever was going on didn't seem to "fit", but no one was available to figure out what else to do.

When we arrived back in the resource room, the tutor assigned to John was not there and the resource room teacher made no move to assume responsibility for him. Joni decided to join the kindergarten classroom, but we arrived to find an empty room. Joni remembered that it was music time and his classmates must be in the music room.

> *[I am] not a direct service person, but I am in the classroom almost every day. I see almost every child every day. . . .If the tutor is having a specific problem around something, I may take the child and work with the child myself to get a sense of what the issue is or I will do some modeling for the teachers. . . .I am the chairperson of the child's IEP, so it gives me some nice hands-on time to work with the child.*

Sonia: A "Teacher of Teachers"

Once she received her Master's degree and initial special educator teaching license, Sonia worked for three years as a roaming special educator. She wrote IEPs, provided individual and small group instruction for a wide variety of students across several schools, each of whom was included some of the time in general education classrooms and schedules. She assessed students, designed curriculum, and monitored their progress. She also tried to help them develop friends and support networks as often as she could. Like Joni, she felt uneasy that she couldn't be available enough for any one student to really provide everything s/he needed. She also worried about what was happening for her students when she was not around, but had few really good ways to find out.

After roaming for two years, Sonia took a new job as an inclusion specialist for an intermediate district that provided specialized services for a number of districts in the area. Her new job still kept her moving, but doing different tasks. Joni was responsible for seventeen schools in two districts. Together with two other specialists in her office, she developed and taught inservices for the general and special educators in their assigned schools. She also coordinated the special education team at each school, guiding them through the process of creating IEPs, lesson plans, and behavior plans for all the students with disabilities.

She was often called upon to manage what seemed to be the ever present crises and was lauded as very clever at putting out such fires. In fact, when we visited, we found her talking on the phone, but she signaled to wait and then cupped her hand over the mouthpiece and whispered, "The biggest issue is behavior. It's not anything else. It is the very biggest issue with teachers that I deal with."

Sonia liked the change in role. She was more and more convinced that her knowledge and skills were best used to help other teachers acquire them for their own use instead of having her try to get to every student. During our visit Sonia was scheduled to meet at a middle school about a child who was presenting some behavior issues. In fact, as we arrived, the case manager greeted us with her desperation: "I'm so glad you're here. We're going nuts and I don't think we could hold on one more week the way things are going. We're in trouble."

During the meeting with two educational assistants, the case manager and the resource teacher, Sonia emphasized again the importance of safe-space and charting and meeting regularly. "I hate to say 'I told you so,' but you guys have a crisis that just didn't have to happen. You needed to have regular team meetings about Sadie and it sounds like you haven't met since I was here more than a month ago." As we left for a quick lunch, Sonia vented,

> *I just can't believe this team! They don't need me to do this stuff. I shouldn't have to come out here when things fall apart. They wouldn't have fallen apart if they had just kept meeting and talking to each other. I swear, I feel sometimes like I'm case-managing adults!*

Sonia worried that "putting out fires" consumed too much of her time and really was a symptom of deeper issues. Besides, she was not always confident that her solutions were really going to last because she often didn't have quite enough time to investigate what caused the crisis in the first place: "The problem is that in most instances, I don't know the students or the situation and often my ideas are a quick fix. Yes, I do fix it quickly and then it falls apart in two weeks."

On the other hand, there would always be some kind of crisis to manage, but there might come a time – perhaps even before she is ready to retire – when the teachers in her two districts pretty much know what she knows and don't need her inservices and advice. Still, she consoled herself,

> *Teachers are alone, so it is nice to have an educational specialist come in and talk to them. So I will sit with them and I will get them to talking and I will listen real well. You have to be a good listener and be able to draw that out of people and then help guide them.*

These three roles capture the various experiences inclusion specialists have as they try to meet their new responsibilities. We found them to be remarkably consistent across the people we formally interviewed, as well as other inclusion specialists we have encountered in other situations. Our shadowing data also captured this range and balance of task patterns. One teacher spent a little over 40% of the time we shadowed him pulling students out to teach as compared to 8% of his time teaching or observing in general education classrooms and 13% talking with teachers or parents. In contrast, another specialist spent no time pulling students out and nearly 40% of her time in classrooms and talking with teachers. Perhaps the biggest range of difference involved paperwork, with one specialist spending 64% of her time at desk work compared to another who only spent 9%. The patterns reflect the three roles rather well. "Teachers with empty classrooms" are most likely to spend larger proportions of time pulling students out or

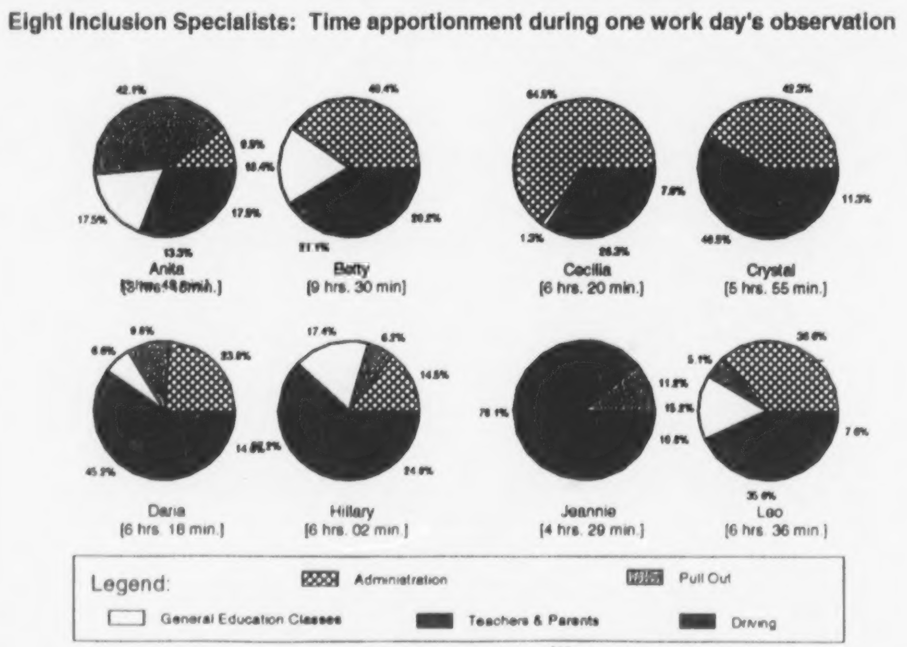

Figure 2

aside and relatively less time doing paperwork or teaching and observing in general education classrooms. In contrast "teachers of teachers" are most likely to spend the bulk of their time talking with teachers and relatively less time teaching at all. Compare the relative proportions of time spent in these various tasks among the eight teachers we shadowed (See Figure 2).

The Predictable Failure of the Inclusion Specialist Role

All of the inclusion specialists that participated in our research, that we have met at conferences, that attend our university classes, and that we work with in schools are able professionals. Indeed, many are praised within their schools and districts as among the best, most energetic, and most forward thinking teachers. Nevertheless almost all experience some of the same worries and dissatisfactions that the teachers who are Ben, Joni, and Sonia shared with us. Yet, it seems to us that these teachers' frustrations are all too predictable, though we admit to the advantage of not only hindsight, but data. We next examine three issues special educators are facing in their efforts to adapt to this new form of practice that we offer as summary of the reality teachers face.

Logistical Dilemmas

As teachers leave their separate classrooms to ply their skills in other teachers' classrooms, the logistical problems of decentralized practice become real and challenging. Some must travel between several schools, but even those who only travel within a single building face the management challenge of scheduling time with each of *their* students within the constraints of other teachers' constantly changing and rarely predictable schedules. At best, these traveling teachers are able to deliver effective teaching some of the time. At worst, their students may learn less while suffering inadvertent, but increased, visibility as being different by virtue of the special attention and the unresolved question of teacher ownership. It is this very kind of visibility that can risk the fragile social connections the students might otherwise make with their peers, which Lori agonized about, and which generated the challenge to work with all students instead of just the labeled students.

Furthermore, while "not enough time" is the ubiquitous slogan of all teachers, for these peripatetic teachers without, or with empty, classrooms, the slogan takes on the reality of simple fact: not being able to directly teach their dispersed students to their professional satisfaction. Neither can they effectively serve as "curriculum collaborators" and "team teachers" when their students' teachers may be members of many different teams, each demanding a share of the available time. When asked, both general and special educators consistently identify ***time*** as a critical barrier to accomplishing inclusion, as well as many other school reforms (e.g., Werts, Wolery, Snyder, & Caldwell, 1996).

We believe that the barrier of time is at least as much about barriers to using time well as about actual minutes in a day. One example involves the different approaches to planning curriculum and teaching understood by general and special educators. Within special education we rely upon detailed annual planning that is supposed to guide not only teachers' expectations for a labeled student's learning, but to guide day to day teaching. Yet planning from any teacher's point of view is really just an effort to gain some amount of comfortableness with the usual chaos of classrooms. Plans impose some order and direction, but are rarely expected to unfold exactly as prepared. Teaching plans are meant to be changed; the plan just gives teachers enough structure to change things for the better more often than for the worse. All too often, however, the long term prescriptive nature of the IEP either leads teachers to forget the essential unpredictability of teaching, or the functionality of the IEP for informing day to day teaching decisions is lost entirely. Too many IEPs, crafted after many hours of devotion by special educators, languish in file cabinets until the annual process gears up again 9-10 months later.

General educators, for their part, tend to plan for longer periods of time in broader strokes, leaving the detailed lesson planning to right before, and even during, their teaching. General educators also tend to start their planning from the broader view of the whole class rather than any one child's learning perspective and then later tailor expectations, tasks, and accomplishments for individual students. That is, special educators tend to plan from the "bottom up" – the student to the class – while general educators plan from the "top down" – the class to the student.

Given these essential differences in planning, it's not surprising that IEPs, even for students "included" in general education classrooms, tend to be divorced from the general education curriculum, emphasizing incremental progress in skills that primarily address overcoming or improving deficits. General educators, quite reasonably, see such plans as daunting, wondering, "How do I do this and teach the rest of the class?" When general and special educators have such fundamental differences in what their planning needs to accomplish, even what might seem a rich amount of planning time can still be woefully inadequate. Not surprisingly, we think, teachers drift from working together to dividing the task: special educators plan for labeled students, and general educators plan for non-labeled students. In such situations there is rarely enough time to surface all the underlying assumptions and unravel the logic of each separate plan so that they might be knit together into a single coherent learning experience for the class.

Personal Loss

Special educators, like most educators, enter their profession to teach children and youth. They enjoy being around children. They are challenged by the search for ways to help children learn. They are rewarded by the resulting growth, however small or great, each student achieves. However, many inclusion specialists find themselves asked to shift their focus from teaching children and youth to teaching teachers and teaching assistants. All the job descriptions and much of the descriptive literature for this role emphasize this teaching-of-adults function, sometimes in quite informal ways (modeling, collaborating), sometimes quite formal (consulting, offering inservices).

To be sure, there are some unique and important compensations in teaching grown-ups, but many inclusion specialists struggle to find the same satisfactions in these more indirect efforts to influence and enable other educators to teach their previous students. Some worry about the logic of using personnel who were prepared to teach children to supervise teacher assistants who possess no such preparation. Others feel devalued and discouraged by having "team" teaching devolve to being the general educator's teacher assistant (Davis & Ferguson, 1992). One such pair of teachers (Keller & Cravedi-Cheng, 1995) describe this process well:

> *. . . we both assumed from the beginning that I [Nancy] would be responsible for delivering the content and Lia would assist me in this endeavor. This rather conventional assumption — teacher and teacher assistant — provided the basis for dividing our labor. . . . In other words, I identified the content to be covered, set objectives, and did*

> *the majority of lesson planning, teaching and evaluating. Lia verbally and physically prompted students to focus on the instruction, checked their understanding, and limited off-task behavior.* (p. 83)

Whether or not the special educator finds new challenge in working with adults – whether as a teacher, or an assistant, the loss of teaching **children** can be a most personal one.

It seems to us both understandable and predictable that some inclusion specialists retreat from this part of the role shift, like our Ben and Joni examples, and find ways to pursue the very activity that brought them to the field. The "ownership" issue may be at least as much about special educators' unwillingness to part with an important facet of their professional identity as about general educators' willingness to accept the responsibility of teaching students with disabilities. Brenda and Gail, two of the general educators we talked to, reveal their perspective on "ownership" this way:

> *I'm not really up on the process of the IEP. I refer them to the specialist and the resource room. I sit in on it, but I'm not really in charge. I just talk about how Christian is doing in the classroom and the adjustment and all that — how he is, and how he compares with the other kids. [Brenda]*
>
> *The first week, I thought, "Oh, my gosh! What am I going to do? My class is falling apart." I kind of let the special ed person take over and work with this child. So I didn't feel in control. I had to take back ownership of the child. . . . The special ed person is the case manager of the IEP, but it is my responsibility overall.*
>
> *. . . I believe that if I don't have ownership or if I'm not invested in what the goals are for her, that I'm not going to carry it out. I mean, if it came kind of from a top down approach, then I'm like likely to follow through with that. But if it's a mutual investment in this child, or a mutual decision, I am much more invested in being consistent and carrying that through. [Gail]*

Not only does Gail reveal some of the tensions that from her point of view might be created when both teachers want to teach children, she also uses language like "top down" and "follow through" that illustrate some of the artifacts of a third issue.

Ironies of Expertise

Special educators become itinerant specialists or support teachers based in part on the assumption that they have a special expertise to share with "general" educators who now have been charged with teaching "their" students. This assumption is grounded in a long history of preparing teachers to work not so much with children or youth, but with specific kinds of children. As Seymour Sarason (1990) sees it,

> *School personnel are graduates of our colleges and universities. It is there that they learn there are at least two types of human beings, and if you choose to work with one of them you render yourself legally and conceptually incompetent to work with others (p. 258).*

We would add to this observation that our content- and category-driven licensing tradition has led to even greater fractionation than "two types of human beings". Many special educators fail to realize that the "attitudinal problems" they decry in their general education colleagues, is a natural, appropriate, and indeed, **professional** response to being asked to teach a child you have not been officially licensed to teach.

Our parallel systems of general and special education are a direct product of the belief shared among all educational personnel, families of school children and school children themselves after awhile, that:

- students are responsible for their own learning;
- when students don't learn, there is something wrong with them;
- and it is the responsibility of schools to determine what is wrong with as much precision as possible so that students can be directed to the teachers, classrooms, curricula, and teaching practices that match their learning profiles (Ferguson, 1995).

As special education gradually funneled more and more students away from the general education classroom, general educators literally became less able to accommodate student differences. At the same time, separated from the culture and activity of general education classrooms, special educators became less and less familiar with general education curriculum, developments in instructional strategies, learning theories, and innovative assessment practices. After several generations of creating a system of public education where information as well as people are carefully separated, we now ask inclusion specialists to teach in settings they don't understand relying on practices that may not be appropriate.

To be sure, special educators sometimes possess quite specific expertise in special instructional technologies, certain forms of assessment, educational law, physical modifications and adaptations, and information about how to manage a variety of other relatively rare events and issues. Unfortunately, when such specialized information is decontextualized, interpolating it for general education content, assessment, and curriculum development is nearly impossible.

The Case for Mixed-Ability Groups of Teachers

Before we describe what we believe to be some promising directions for thinking about professional roles, we offer one more story drawn from our work with teachers and schools that captures both the constraints of the past and the possibilities of the future.

A Story to Point[1]

While "leasing space" to special education students and teachers is how many general educators' approach to inclusion begins, it often shifts at some point to an appreciation of the relative unimportance of the student's differences and a growing confidence that they can construct effective learning experiences even for quite different students. This realization happens for different teachers in different ways, and not at all for others. Molly's experience with Heidi is one instructive example.

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[1] This story is condensed from a longer account that first appeared in Ferguson & Meyer, 1996.

At South Valley, most of the teachers, understood inclusion to be about a relocation of special education services. At the beginning of the year third grade teacher Molly Cole negotiated with the new inclusion specialist, Rachel, about the introduction of a student with significant disabilities into her classroom.

> I'm happy to have Heidi in my room for the socialization. . .but I can't promise you that she's going to be able to read at the end of the year. . . . I feel like, "You guys are the special ed people. It's your job and if you decide that she's really not learning what she needs to be learning this year, then I trust that you're going to come in here and take her out and teach her, but it's fine with me if she's in here."

Heidi joined the class accompanied by the support of a full time, one-on-one, educational assistant (EA).

Molly's Discovery

Asta, a general educator from Iceland pursuing a master's degree in special education, was doing practicum in Molly's class to learn more about including students with significant disabilities in general education. Asta turned out to be an important contributor to Molly's discovery. In her first days in the classroom, Asta worried about the support provided to Heidi by the educational assistant (EA):

> The assistant was sitting next to Heidi, even supporting her arms and hands and telling her what to do . . . and trying to get her to look like all the other kids. In the very beginning I felt that this didn't look right. It looked so different from what all the other kids were getting. [I thought] Heidi was getting frustrated. . . .She didn't do the things she was supposed to do. She was hitting the assistant. When I was watching, I thought to myself, "She doesn't want all this support. She wants to do it by herself. She has a strong will."

Asta kept these feelings to herself for awhile, but eventually, "I just jumped in and said, 'I think she doesn't want this support'" during a discussion with Rachel and the EA. Asta's challenge created some tense times for the next few weeks. Rachel and the EA worried that things weren't working out well for Heidi, and decided that they would pull her back to Room 10 [the previous self-contained special education classroom]. When informed of Rachel's decision, Asta and Molly realized that they had been thinking along the same lines. Molly remembers:

> My style of working with [Heidi] was not as demanding, not as forceful – a little bit more letting her guide and show me what she could do. The EA was guiding her, not giving her much power. I think Asta can work beautifully with her because her teaching naturally follows [the child]. But if you think of her as this little special ed child that you have to control and boss and tell her what to do and keep her on task, she's going to get real stubborn and you're not going to get much out of her.

After several discussions, Rachel agreed to postpone implementing her decision to remove Heidi from the classroom and let Molly and Asta design a different support plan that used the EA less and permitted Heidi more flexibility. Together the teachers watched Heidi begin to work and learn. She began to "look so different! Happier!" "She was writing, working, sharing her journal with the other kids." Heidi learned all the objectives on her IEP and more. She learned to write more than her name, to not just copy letters and numbers, but write them in dates and little sentences. Molly was "blown away a lot of the time" about how well Heidi learned.

Asta realized that her years of experience as an elementary school teacher served her better with Heidi than she had expected, and better even than some of the special education she had learned in her B.Ed. program. By sharing their thinking and experience, Asta and Molly learned together that:

> *Heidi is not different. She's just like the other kids. We have to find out for each one what it is they need. Some of them are really easy and it takes you just a day to find out, [but] some of them are really tough. [Asta]*
>
> *If I hadn't had Asta in the room I would not be nearly as far as I am. She and I have the same sense about how to deal with children and to have somebody else in the room that you can bounce ideas around with has just been really wonderful. I don't think I would have been brave enough to do some of the things that I've done if I hadn't had somebody I respected to [confirm] what I was thinking and seeing. A lot of the other teachers in the building are wanting and getting more support – more EAs or Rachel in the room – helping out with the children or working one-on-one with that particular child. The other teachers have found that to be very helpful, but in my classroom it was detrimental. Heidi wanted me to be her teacher and it was annoying to Heidi to have somebody else bossing her around. It was annoying to me to have someone else talking in the room when [the class was] trying to listen to me and to have the two of them fighting over whether or not she was going to do what she wanted to do. It was very frustrating for the EA because she felt like she wasn't getting any respect. [But] I didn't really know how to say to her "I'm the teacher here. I want you to do it the way I'm doing it." [Molly]*

In this example, Molly started to see some of the special education practices – now so much more visible in so many more classrooms – as somehow keeping children dependent, teaching them to wait for adult directions – and often not even hers – rather than taking responsibility for some of their own learning. Furthermore, her reciprocal sense of the "ownership" issue was especially compromised when a large IEP meeting for Heidi was canceled simply because Rachel was ill. Molly, with frustration, commented "I could – and should – have written that IEP. She's in my class and I'm her teacher this year!."

For Rachel's part, the whole enterprise was a new one — for her and for her school. She had had to have separate negotiations on behalf of each of her other 11 students, and she couldn't expect that Molly's willingness to take over as Heidi's teacher would be the general response from other classroom teachers. Having known minutely what her students were working on in years past, Rachel now understandably felt some discomfort when any one of her parents wanted to know what their student was "working on this week." Furthermore, neither she or the district were completely comfortable relinquishing the accountability for the IEP planning and documentation processes.

Expanding the notion of "all"

So if inclusion specialists are not the answer, what actually *is* the question? So far we've tried to establish that the role of inclusion specialist is likely not the best solution for "figuring out what to do with the special education grown-ups" as we try to restructure schools to include all students. Our long history of practice in preparing educators, organizing schooling, and assessing student achievement has led to a situation where special educators know too little about general education to operate comfortably within its instructional, curricular, and assessment contexts. Similarly, although there is some important information general educators may not know, they do typically know some of the most critical aspects of how to individually tailor learning for any learner. Unfortunately, our history of parallel initial preparation and service delivery systems results in too many educators believing they not only cannot, but should not, teach students with labeled disabilities. As special education administrators agonize over legal requirements for maintenance of effort and the provision of specially designed instruction, more and more parents and teachers are realizing that all students deserve a schooling experience that provides them with the kind of "specially designed instruction" that supports their learning, regardless of their particular mix of learning styles, ability, needs, intelligences, or preferences.

The question, it seems to us, is much larger than inclusion, special educators, or students with disabilities. It is about what schooling should be and could accomplish. As Eliot Eisner has put it, the question is "What really counts in schools?" (Eisner, 1991). Answering Eisner's question in the day to day life of schooling involves consideration of much more than students with disabilities and special educators.

Unfortunately, and certainly unintentionally, much of the professional and popular literature about inclusion has focused attention on "all students", which is fast becoming special education advocacy code for trying to ensure the rights of still excluded learners. Yet for the values embedded in the notion of inclusion to ever be obtained in our schools, we must not be misdirected to focus just on all **students**. Rather, we must enlarge our perspective to **all** teachers, **all** curricular reforms, **all** teaching reforms, **all** support personnel, **all** policies, **all** strategies for student assessment, and so on.

The "solution" of changing special educators into inclusion specialists emerged from assumptions about student learning and teacher capacity. The limits of this strategy will only be overcome by enlarging the discussion to examine assumptions about learning and teacher capacity that undergird our schooling practices so that we might shift our focus from those that perpetuate the labeling and separation of students, teachers, and curriculum to those that might enable **all** teachers to creatively blend their various abilities to the benefit of **all** students' learning (Asuto, Clark, Read, McGree & deKoven, 1994; Skrtic, 1995). While this is by no means a small task, we believe it to be both possible and necessary. Other chapters in this book have offered analyses that lead to this same conclusion in one way or another. Our contribution is to argue for redirecting our collective efforts in three areas that we think will contribute to not only achieving "mixed-ability groups of teachers" but reinvented schools as well. In this last section we will make our case for shifting attention: (1) from a reliance on individual practice to a reliance on group practice, (2) from a focus on teaching to a focus on learning, and (3) from special educators' efforts to "reform" general education to more fundamental collective efforts to restructure education.

From Individual to Group Practice

Molly's story nicely illustrates how our current system has created teachers with different knowledge and information and how that information is differently legitimated. Molly **knew** some important things about Heidi as a learner, but her status as a "general" educator made her knowledge automatically suspect and illegitimate in the face of the "official" knowledge possessed by Rachel and her assistants because their own labels matched Heidi's. Even though Molly and Asta spent more time observing and interacting with Heidi, their presumed proper role and responsibility was to accept and implement Rachel's expertise as the system's approved specialist in teaching and learning for students with labels like Heidi's.

We are challenging these assumptions about legitimate knowledge and the role of specialists because teachers like Molly, Asta, and Rachel as well as Ben, Joni, and Sonia, teach us not only that the assumptions do not hold up in practice, but more importantly, they easily get in the way of effective learning for students, as they did for Heidi. The nearly hundred year history of sorting and separating both students and teachers has resulted in very little common ground. Rachel and Molly know a few of the same things about schools, teaching, and learning, but most of the knowledge and skills they rely upon to fulfill their professional responsibilities seem so unique – even mysterious – that sometimes we think special and general educators must feel as if they are barely in the same profession. Legitimating one teacher's knowledge over another is an artifact of our history that is just as insupportable as creating the separations in the first place. It seems clear to us that rethinking our approach to inclusion as but one dimension of a broader general education restructuring must have as one of its goals to increase the common ground of knowledge and skills between general and special educators.

Having said that, let us hasten to add that we are not arguing for **all** educators to become "generalists" or "Super Teachers" who are presumed to possess **all** the skills and information needed to serve the learning of **all** students. We think it very unlikely that anyone could possibly achieve such mastery and competence. Rather, we propose that instead of assigning only one teacher to a classroom of 20 or more learners, or to a content area with instructional responsibility for 150-250 students, groups of teachers be collectively responsible for groups of diverse learners. Only through group practice will educators be able to combine their talents and information and work together to meet the demands of student diversity in ways that retain the benefits of past practice but that overcome its limitations.

These groups of teachers can bring to the task both a common store of knowledge and skills, but also different areas of specialty. Only groups of teachers are likely together to possess the wide range of information and skills really needed to work with today's student diversities. In order to achieve a shift from individual to group teaching practice, we must build upon the current collaboration initiatives among educational professionals in two ways. If collaboration means anything at all, surely it means that two or more people create an outcome for a student that no one of them could have created alone. Group practice creates just such an ongoing, dynamic context, helping educators with varying abilities to contribute to the kind of synergy necessary for effective collaboration.

Replace restrictive assignments with shared assignments.

Current teacher licensure practices tend to be restrictive, limiting the students an educator can teach to specific categories. Of course, some of these categories are broader than others, ranging from specific disabilities ("LD" or "MR" certifications for learning disabilities and mental retardation respectively) to "levels" of students ("mild", "severe") to disability types and particular ages (secondary severe, or elementary LD). One key feature of mixed-ability group teaching practice, particularly as we await changes in certification requirements to reflect the restructuring of schools, is that teachers share working with all children and youth as part of a team, regardless of their formal preparation or the labels on their certification. We think this step critical because it is one of the most efficient ways for teachers more narrowly educated to "cross-pollinate", quickly increasing the size of their common ground. More importantly, shared assignments create the contexts in which genuine collaboration can occur.

When Molly and Asta shared their perceptions and concerns – not just once in a brief exchange or meeting, but in the little captured moments of their ongoing shared experience –

they created with each other the capacity to challenge Rachel's official knowledge and then support each other to work through the consequences of that challenge. To her credit, Rachel was able to hear the possibilities in what Asta and Molly shared and courageous enough to permit the challenge to her official expertise, at least on an experimental basis.

We have encountered a number of schools pursuing group practice through shared assignments. A common first step among special educators is to assign various special education support staff within a building – resource room teacher, speech/language specialist, Title 1 teacher, previous self-contained classroom teacher – to a smaller number of classrooms where they can be responsible for students with all the labels they had each separately served across a much larger number of classrooms. While the previous resource room teacher may feel unprepared to assist the student with significant multiple disabilities, learning how to gather that information from colleagues with different specialties is a "step on the way" to more complete group practice with general educators.

Other schools we know are beginning to create group practice work groups that include some number of general educators as well as one or more special educators and other certified or classified support staff. Just this year South Valley Elementary School, with which we have a long standing collaborative relationship, reorganized into three smaller "vertical" communities. Each includes classroom teachers from kindergarten to grade 5 as well as a special educator and a number of classroom assistants previously assigned either to special education or Title 1. These new groups are just beginning to construct the kinds of working relationships that will support their various efforts to change their teaching practices, improve literacy, experiment with multiple intelligences theory, and develop better student assessment systems for what they actually teach, but already there are new roles for the special educators as members of the workgroups.

Two of the workgroups have already begun designing curriculum together. Since they are part of the discussion from the beginning, the special educators can help tailor the development of the various learning objectives, activities, and assessment tools to better incorporate the unique learning of labeled students. Being part of the design of general education curriculum from the beginning means that special educators no longer have to try to "fit" labeled students into a completed plan. It also creates opportunities for previous special educators to teach more aspects of the plan to all the students instead of being relegated as "helpers" for those that might be having trouble or need extra help or support. In one of the workgroups the commitment to group practice has allowed them to group all the students into smaller literacy groups, each of the members of the team taking responsibility for several, regardless of the official title or certification, each member of the team contributing support in his or her own areas of knowledge and interest to others so that students in all the groups experience the best teaching of the collective team.

Other buildings are reorganizing more around grade-level or block teams, where groups meet regularly to share curriculum planning, allocate resources, schedule activities, share teaching tasks (e.g. rotating the class through each of the three or four teachers when doing a unit, each teacher focusing on material according to his/her strengths and interests), and to problem solve issues on behalf of the now "mutually owned" students. In some schools, teams stay with their students, some for as many as 10 years (cf. The Danish school system) to achieve maximum benefits of long-term relationships among teachers, students and families.

Personnel preparation programs are reflecting a transition to group practice as well. More gradually, but increasingly, initial preparation programs are merging foundational general and special education content and licensure outcomes. Some states are simultaneously shifting from restrictive, "stand alone" licensure categories to a greater emphasis on "add on" endorsements to initial, usually broader licenses. Innovative continuing professional development opportunities also encourage shared general and special educators to study collaboratively with pre-service students as they pursue continuing professional development and specialization (e.g., Baumgart & Ferguson, 1991; Ferguson, 1994; Goodlad, 1990). In this way the directions of ongoing professional development can be determined by the needs of a particular group or school to "round out" or increase some area of capacity, say in designing behavioral and emotional supports or extending their use of technology.

From a focus on teaching to a focus on learning

Historically we have cared most about what students *know*. Teachers must "cover" content, making sure that as many students as possible remember it all. We've assured ourselves that our schools are doing well through the scores students achieve on tests which measure their acquisition of this content – at least until the test is over. Much teacher work involved introducing new material, giving students various opportunities to practice remembering that content, and assuring all of us of their success by frequently testing memory and mastery in preparation for the official achievement assessments.

The confluence of demands upon schools as we move toward the largely unknown demands of the next century is gradually shifting educators' focus away from what gets taught to what gets learned, and used. Elementary and secondary teachers everywhere are beginning to experiment with new curricular and teaching approaches that emphasize students' mastery not just of facts and content, but also of essential thinking skills like problem-solving, analysis, collaboration, and experimentation. Rather than measuring what students have remembered about what we've taught, educators are as interested in how students can demonstrate that they understand and can use whatever they've learned in school and in their various pursuits outside of school. Many promising curricular and instructional approaches are emerging in general education. Some teachers, for example, design learning unique to each student through the logic of multiple intelligences and learning styles. Learning is increasingly active, requiring students not just to listen, but to learn by doing. Teachers are turning to projects, exhibitions, portfolios, along with other kinds of curriculum-based information and measurement strategies, to learn what students have learned and can do with their learning (e.g., Darling-Hammond, Ancess, & Falk, 1995; Fogarty, 1995; Harmin, 1994; Valencia, Hiebert & Afflerbach, 1994).

The values and logic behind these approaches can be extremely powerful when extended to all kinds of diverse learners, including special education labeled students. Nevertheless, this is also an area of schooling where the "cross-pollination" between general and special educators has yet to occur very thoroughly. For example, special educators have used activity-based assessment, individually-tailored curriculum, and locally-referenced, community-based instruction for some time now. They created these approaches precisely because they were concerned to use time well for students who might find learning difficult, even slow. Directly teaching students in ways that emphasized how they used their learning not only saved valuable time, but for some students was the only way for them to really appreciate their need to learn. For their part, general educators working with innovative designs of curriculum and teaching stretch their application to only part of the diverse students in schools today. Special education students generally fall outside the pale of such innovation in the minds of most general educators (and special educators familiar with them) even when the ideas and techniques would actually enrich and enable the learning of students with disabilities.

A major stumbling block in the synthesis of approaches that have emerged from both general and special education has been the documentation and reporting of student learning, both because standard grading and achievement measurement practices uncomfortably fit the new curriculum strategies, as well as because annually-written IEP goals and objectives rarely reflect or document what students actually learn in general education contexts. Like changes in curriculum, this shift in focus on student learning and accomplishments will also require restructured teacher planning, new assessment strategies, and less reliance on proscribed curricula. But achieving such changes requires working in two additional arenas.

Standards? Or Standardization?

There is great confusion among teachers about the role of *higher, national, standards* for learning and the incorporation of diverse learning agendas and accomplishments (Gagnon, 1995; McLaughlin, Shepard & O'Day, 1995; Oregon Department of Education Draft Performance Standards, 1996; United States Department of Education, Special Education Programs, 1996). Does "standard" mean standardization in the sense of every student accomplishing exactly the same thing to the same picture of mastery, performance or other measurement? If so, how can any standard accommodate diverse students – especially students with disabilities? If the call for higher national standards means that children really excel – push themselves to do, know, understand just a little more than they thought they could – then how can we compare the achievement of high standards from one student to the next? Never mind, from one school, one district, one state to the next.

Our work with schools suggests that the entire standards discussion is confusing the requirements of program evaluation – *i.e. how well are our schools helping the students* ***collectively*** *to achieve our articulated standards of learning accomplishment?* – with teacher, student, and parent needs for individual student evaluation – *how is Sarah accomplishing our articulated standards of learning accomplishment? And how does that make sense for her?* Within any group of students, learning accomplishment for some proportion of the group will not necessarily look or be exactly the same as for others in the group. In fact, it would be very surprising if there weren't several different patterns of accomplishment in any group of students.

Finding a way to legitimate that some students in any group can accomplish a "standard" in different ways is at the heart of the standards dilemma. If "accomplishment" can mean different things for different students – certainly a logical outcome of the individually tailored curriculum and teaching practices being encouraged – then the various student accomplishments are difficult to "add up" in any straightforward way. Yet adding up accomplishments against a single defined standard is the essential requirement of program assessment. If everyone is achieving the standards in different ways, how can we know how well our schools are doing collectively?

We think this dilemma is possible to resolve if the requirements of program assessment are separated from the requirements of student assessment. Each student and his or her parents should receive individual feedback about how well the student is learning, how much growth she has accomplished during some period of time, and how his or her accomplishments compare to the national or community standard established for our students as a group. However, discretion must be possible in letting any individual student know how he or she is compared to others.

There is no safety in numbers when your own individual achievement is compared to others. Teachers and parents should have the discretion to filter the comparative message for individual students in ways that encourage and enable interest and effort rather than discourage and disable it. Without interest and effort, learning is shallowly compulsory and soon divorced from use and pursuit.

At the same time, all students' various accomplishments can be summarized in individually anonymous ways to answer the question of how any particular school is achieving whatever the relevant agreed-upon standard for the students is collectively. In this way, the needs of program assessment and comparison can be met, while leaving the revelations of any particular student's accomplishment in the hands of teachers and parents – surely the best suited to decide. Those students within any group who do not achieve to some collective benchmark might have very good reasons for not doing so while still achieving the more general standard of excellent achievement in a particular area of focus, whether a common curriculum goal, an essential skill, or a learning outcome that emphasizes integration and use of learning in novel ways and situations. Surely the interpretation of the meaning of accomplishment for individual students should rest with those most intimate with the student's learning. An accomplishment rate of 60-80% for any group of students on any collective benchmark would likely tell a school that they are teaching everyone well ,and 20-40% are accomplishing the benchmark in unique ways (Reynolds, Zetlin & Wang, 1993). As in all good program assessment, the appropriateness of the collective data is best judged and used by those closest to the operation of the program. It is the teachers, staff and families that can best determine how the range of results reflects the students with whom they work or whether the collective results should encourage revision of curriculum and teaching practices.

From "Fixing" to Joining General Education

The very notion of an inclusion specialist is predicated upon the idea that general educators simply do not know how to teach students with disabilities and that we special educators must teach them our special knowledge. We have argued here that the idea is fundamentally flawed – many general educators **do** know a lot about teaching students who are different, even disabled, when given the chance. We've also suggested that the expectation that special educators would pass on their knowledge, thereby risking their future as educators, is equally flawed. Our proposal to think instead of "mixed ability groups of teachers", each with different specialties to contribute to the teaching of very diverse groups of students, is one way to integrate the uniqueness of the previous separate "general" and "special" educators into a single, multi-talented teaching corps.

At the heart of our message and analysis in this chapter is that we special educators should stop trying to "fix" general education by trying to make them more like us. There is, of course, an understandable historical reason for thinking that general education needs to be "fixed" to better meet the challenge of students' disabilities and diversities. The field of special education is an artifact of the effort, beginning shortly after the advent of compulsory education, to sort "different" students of any kind into other environments where specially trained teachers might better meet their learning needs. Returning such students to the very environment that rejected them seems educationally irresponsible and foolhardy unless that receiving environment is changed in some quite substantial way.

Our experience, however, suggests that the long separation between the people and practices of general and special education has irrevocably altered both perspectives. General educators feel unable and ill-suited to teach students with disabilities. Special educators believe they know much about teaching students with disabilities, but really know little about the general education into which inclusion demands students and special educators must operate.

Too much of our rhetoric has been about changing general education. We are asserting here that special educators are ill-equipped to lead such an agenda. Instead, we encourage both special and general educators to assume the role of learners. Only when special educators know more about general education, especially the emerging reforms in general education that might easily accommodate the difference of disability, will it be possible for them to share their unique information and experience in ways that are accessible and understandable to general educators. In turn, general educators are more likely to hear and use information from colleagues that speak the same educational dialect of school improvement and student accomplishment.

We need schools that benefit from the experience of **both** general **and** special educators in the design and accomplishment of student learning. We think this book contributes to an effort to shift from our tendencies to frame issues and understanding as “either/or” to a new tendency to seek “both/and”.

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CHANGING TACTICS: EMBEDDING INCLUSION REFORMS WITHIN GENERAL EDUCATION RESTRUCTURING EFFORTS

Dianne L. Ferguson

For more than two decades special educators in various places of the globe have been pursuing reforms in the design and delivery of special education services and supports. (Dalmau, Hatton & Spurway, 1991; Fullan, 1991; Fullwood, 1990; Gartner & Lipsky, 1987; O'Hanlon, 1995). We have, or have had, *mainstreaming, integration, reverse mainstreaming, inclusion, inclusive schooling, inclusive schools*, and *schools for all.* Certainly these various slogans have meant different things in different countries at different times, and different things over time in single countries. Some initiatives have relied upon civil rights discourse to argue against separate, segregated or variously differentiated forms of schooling. Other reforms have focused more on how to incorporate specially designed, technically different, but needed teaching practices into general education settings and activities. Some reforms emphasized the needs of students with relatively mild, but troublesome, learning differences; others emphasized the needs of students with significant, even quite severe and multiple disabilities.

Despite differences in meaning and focus, a common vision of what these variously named reforms might mean is clearly emerging. In different ways, some countries have reached the conclusion that people with disabilities have a natural and rightful place in our societies. Schools, as one part of that society, should mirror this broader commitment. Of course, it is the resultant discussions, dilemmas, challenges, and questions that have occupied educators ever since, as they have tried to understand not just what such a commitment might mean, but how to make it happen.

After years of research and effort in pursuit of a greater understanding of inclusion, there is now growing certainty among some educators that inclusive reforms in special education must be pursued in terms of the general education restructuring and improvement (Ferguson, 1995a; Berres, Ferguson, Knoblock & Woods, 1996; National Association of State Boards of Education, 1990; Pearman, Huang, Barnhart, & Mellblom, 1992; Sailor & Skirtic, 1995; Skirtic, 1995; Tetler, 1995). Indeed, some have argued that unless this merging of effort occurs, special education reforms will only achieve partial success at best and may even end up reinforcing and maintaining the very assumptions and practices that the reforms seek to change.

The question of what needs to be different in schools seems much larger than inclusion, special educators, or students with disabilities. It is about what schooling should be and could accomplish. As Eliot Eisner has put it, the question is "What really counts in schools?" (Eisner, 1991). Answering Eisner's question in the day to day life of schooling involves consideration of much more than students with disabilities and special educators.

General educators, too, are realizing that the efforts of renewal and reform that seemed adequate to resolve the educational problems of the past will simply not suffice.

Doing better and more efficient schooling work (renewal) or changing existing procedures, rules, and requirements to accommodate new circumstances (reform) will not quiet the need, or calls for changes as we approach the next millennium. Instead, educators now argue, schools must begin to engage in the activities that will change the "fundamental assumptions, practices and relationships, both within the organization, and between the organization and the outside world, in ways that lead to improved student learning outcomes" (Asuto, Clark, McGree & de Koven Pelton Fernancez, 1994; Conley, 1991, p. 15; Elmore, 1996). Since many of these fundamental assumptions helped to create the very separateness special education reforms seek to diminish, it is just such fundamental changes that might realize the vision of inclusion.

Yet in a recent review Cohen found "little evidence of direct and powerful links between policy and practice" (1995, p.11). Schools continue to struggle with an increasing diversity of students who challenge the common curriculum and ability-grouping practices long dominant throughout the system. At the same time, advancements in theories and practices of teaching and learning are leading to new focus on students' understanding and use of their learning rather than recall of facts or isolated skills. Even more challenging, students must demonstrate use or performance of their learning. Since those uses and performances might vary according to students' particular abilities, interests, and life purposes, how then do teachers respond to calls for a single higher standard of achievement? In the face of such conflicting messages and challenges, school professionals are also facing rapid erosion of financial support and public respect. Not only are they being asked to "do more with less," but also they are blamed for being incompetent for not accomplishing such an impossible task.

Issues and Actions

As we are beginning to realize (Asuto, et al., 1994; Clark & Asuto, 1994; Fullan, 1994; 1996), changing schools is both a nonlinear and bi-directional task. "Top down" policy changes must be met by "bottom up" changes in capacity, commitment and coherence among teachers, students and families if changes are to become more than superficial accommodations. At the same time, there is no single roadmap for achieving deeper change. Local events, resources, and personal dynamics combine to create for any particular school or district a unique choreography of change, characterized as much by stepping back as by stepping forward. Teachers and parents must become active co-constructors of new school communities, collaborating with one another, with students, and local community members (Berres et al., 1996; Council of Administrators of Special Education, 1993; Cohen, 1995; Dalmau et al., 1991; Darling-Hammond, Ancess & Falk, 1995; Ferguson, 1995a). If fundamental change is to occur in teaching/learning for teachers and students, and the dual systems of special and general education merged into a unified system of all students, we must resolve three issues:

Issue 1: How does special education become an integral part of public schooling? Experience and research have well elaborated the complexity of this issue. One of the most straightforward questions involves how to deliver the specialty and support services long associated with special education. Another involves whether or not such integration requires specialized personnel or personnel with various specialties. And perhaps most challenging is what to do with the current special educator complement who may not have the capacity to shift to new roles easily?

Issue 2: How will higher education, various research organizations, educational labs, institutes, and other research organizations in both general and special education need to change? In the same way that relationships in school will need to change, our relationships in higher education and research must be different.. Can we learn from each other or are the contingencies in such organizations incompatible with the very kind of cross pollination we are asking of school teachers? Are we asking the right questions, or do we need to refocus our efforts into arenas that are more directly responsive to the "definition of the situation" of people in schools?

Issue 3: How should families, individual community members, community agencies, and businesses participate in large-scale school change? Many of our reforms have been slowed down, sometimes thwarted, by the families of the students our reforms seek to serve. It seems there is much room for improved communication and involvement with the families and communities in which we expect our students to use their learning. We could also consider the ways in which parents and other community members might contribute both knowledge and resources to school agendas.

This paper summarizes what my research team and I are learning after three years of investigating these three issues in collaboration with schools in three rural districts in Oregon. Our involvements with the schools in the three districts have varied in time as well as tasks. Yet taken together, our efforts are documenting the ways in which schools are working to support the inclusion of students with disabilities along with the gradual restructuring that could result in the kinds of fundamental changes that will lead to better learning for students and teachers alike.

Legislation begun in 1987 and culminating in Oregon's *Educational Act for the 21st Century* (HB 3565) put Oregon in the forefront of the national calls for comprehensive school reform and restructuring with goals that meet and exceed those of *Goals 2000.* Hallmarks of the Act include an emphasis on identifying high outcome-based standards for all students with grade-level benchmarks, performance-based assessments, common curricular aims, emphasis on essential learning skills, use of developmentally appropriate practices and mixed age grouping at the elementary level and a new focus on career development and practice leading to certificates of initial and advanced mastery at the secondary level.

A simultaneous statewide initiative called "supported education" called for local school districts to move toward a flexible and creative array of supportive education services to provide a free appropriate public education to students with disabilities in general education classrooms. This initiative has been one of five major goals for special education since 1989. Currently virtually all of the local and regional education service districts have responded by restructuring services to students with disabilities so that they are more fully included in the learning life of the school community. In fact, according to 1995 data, 72% of students with disabilities in Oregon are receiving their schooling in general education classrooms compared to 63% in 1991.

These dual agendas set the stage for our collaborative research agreements with schools and districts to help them blend these initiatives together. The specific opportunity afforded by the reforms was the requirement that all districts, and thereby schools, develop individual school profiles upon which to base school improvement plans which would serve as templates for implementation of the various aspects of the comprehensive reforms. A strongly recommended strategy for implementing reforms was to pilot ideas using action research projects and then broadly disseminate successful ideas.

Our *Reinventing Schools Research Project* (Ferguson, D., Ferguson, P., Rivers & Droege, 1994b; United States Department of Education, 1996) targeted two strands of participatory research activity, each aiming toward a different level of the change effort. The first focused on developing collaborative research agreements with a small number of schools. Our thinking was that we could contribute to their school-wide profiling and action research agendas and in so doing would learn a good deal about embedding inclusion goals into broader school restructuring goals. Our second strand focused on supporting the efforts of individual teachers through both continuing professional development and practitioner action research. Figure 1 illustrates our activities across both strands, by our evolving collaborative strategies which I then briefly summarize.

Figure 1 goes here

Strategies for Working with Schools

We have reported the details of our efforts and results elsewhere, though both our results and writing continue (Ferguson, 1995a; Ferguson, 1995b; Ferguson, 1996a; Ferguson, 1996b; Ferguson & Meyer, 1996; Ferguson & Ralph, 1996; Ferguson, Ralph & Katul, in press, Ferguson, in press). Here we will only briefly summarize three procedural strategies we came to rely upon

As we began negotiating research agreements, it was clear to us that the effort to work together as a whole school was a new challenge for most school faculties. In response to this situation we sought to help schools develop and gradually institutionalize more comprehensive information systems upon which to base their improvement planning. Specifically, we helped schools develop and use qualitative-style surveys of parents, teachers, and students that were user friendly and generated rich information that could be summarized relatively easily with our help. We also conducted in-depth interviews and observations within some schools to gather more information about practices and preferences of school faculty with regard to a variety of reforms. Not all our efforts are finished. We are still working within and across schools to embed these broader systems of data collection in continuous improvement processes.

A second important strategy involved a change for us in how we thought about and designed opportunities for continuing professional development. Well-educated and supported teachers have always been the backbone of school reform. Yet all too often our previous educational reforms have underinvested in teachers (Cremin, 1965; Darling-Hammond, 1995). Our experience, supported by the literature (Baumgart & Ferguson, 1991; Goodlad, 1990; Grimmet & Erickson, 1988; Schon, 1983; Sarason, 1986) suggested to us that the traditional division of teacher education into preservice and inservice components is no longer viable, if it ever was (Ferguson, Dalmau, Droege, Boles & Zitek, 1994a). In response we developed a set of professional development alternatives (Ferguson, D., & Ferguson, P., 1992; Ferguson et al., 1994a).

The most comprehensive offering has been a four-course sequence that occurred one night a week through the academic year, concluding with a two-week intensive course in June. During the period since Fall 1992 we have had roughly 250 teachers and other school staff participate in this course sequence; around 35-40 of these participants have been from the districts with which we have also pursued collaborative research. Teaching courses is certainly the currency of universities. In these instances, however, the agendas and constraints district teachers brought to our classes changed our teaching practice. The effort to use the practices we sought to teach not only made our professional development offerings more accessible but contributed to our increasingly collaborative relationships with schools.

Our final strategy for collaborating with the school improvement involved working with individual teachers to use action research to implement reforms in their own practice. The teachers involved also participated in the yearlong professional development course sequence, and in most cases, their action research efforts targeted using some idea, tool, or approach gleaned from these courses. In this way the content of the professional development efforts were validated through the individual action research projects.

Focusing Change in Three Action Arenas

Unfortunately, and certainly unintentionally, much of the professional and popular literature about inclusion has focused attention on "all students" – a phrase that is fast becoming special education advocacy code for trying to ensure the rights of still excluded learners. Yet for the values embedded in the notion of inclusion to ever become an integral part of our schools, we must focus on more than all **students**. Rather, we must enlarge our perspective to **all** teachers, **all** curricular reforms, **all** teaching reforms, **all** support personnel, **all** policies, **all** strategies for student assessment, and so on.

Our experiences with the schools, districts, and teachers involved in our research and professional development efforts suggest that achieving this larger perspective, as well as durable change in the core of educational practice, will involve activity in three action arenas. Indeed, nearly all the specific work in our collaborative research agreements has focused within one or more of these arenas where action and attention is shifting (1) from a focus on teaching to a focus on learning, (2) from a reliance on individual teacher practice to group practice, and (3) from an effort to "deliver service" to one of "providing learner supports".

From a Focus on Teaching to a Focus on Learning

Historically we have cared most about what students *know*. Teachers must "cover" content, making sure that as many students as possible remember it all. We've assured ourselves that our schools are doing well through the scores students achieve on tests which measure their acquisition of this content – at least until the test is over. Much teacher work involved introducing new material, giving students various opportunities to practice remembering that content, and assuring all of us of their success by frequently testing memory and mastery in preparation for the official achievement assessments.

The confluence of demands upon schools as we move toward the largely unknown challenges of the next century is slowly shifting educators' focus away from what gets taught to what gets learned, and used. Elementary and secondary teachers in all the schools we've been working in are experimenting with new curricular and teaching approaches that emphasize students' mastery not just of facts and content, but also, problem-solving, analysis, collaboration, essential thinking skills and experimentation. Rather than measuring what students have remembered about what we've taught, educators are as interested in how students can demonstrate that they understand and can use whatever they've learned in school and in their various pursuits outside of school.

Many promising curricular and instructional approaches have emerged in general education. Some teachers, for example, design learning unique to each student through the logic of multiple intelligences and learning styles as well as through various forms of direct skill teaching. The technology of brain imaging and related neurological research is supporting a wide range of long-used teaching practices and encouraging the development of new ones (Sylwester, 1995). Learning is increasingly active, requiring students not just to listen, but to learn by doing. Teachers are turning to projects, exhibitions, and portfolios, along with other kinds of curriculum-based information and measurement strategies, to find out what students have learned and can do with their learning (e.g., Darling-Hammond et al., 1995; Fogarty, 1995; Harmin, 1994; Valencia, Hiebert & Afflerbach, 1994). The increasing availability of the Internet offers students an opportunity to access many forms of primary data in ways that are flexible, non-linear, and responsive to individual student interests and approaches to learning.

The values and logic behind these (and other) approaches can be extremely powerful when extended to all kinds of learners, including special education labeled students. Nevertheless, this is also an area of schooling where the "cross-pollination" between general and special educators has yet to occur very thoroughly. For example, special educators have used activity-based assessment, individually tailored curriculum, and locally referenced community-based instruction for some time now. They created these approaches precisely because they were concerned about using time well for students who might find learning difficult and labor intensive. Directly teaching students in ways that emphasized how they used their learning not only saved valuable time, but for some students was the only way for them to really appreciate their need to learn. General educators working with innovative designs of curriculum and teaching stretch their application to only some of the students in school today. Special education students generally fall outside the pale of such innovations in the minds of most general educators (and special educators familiar with them) even when the ideas and techniques would actually enrich and enable the learning of students with disabilities.

A major stumbling block in the synthesis of approaches that has emerged from both general and special education has been the documentation and reporting of student learning, both because standard grading and achievement measurement practices uncomfortably fit the new curriculum strategies, as well as because annually-written IEP goals and objectives rarely reflect or document all students actually learn in general education contexts.

Standards? Or Standardization?

There is great confusion among teachers about the role of *higher, national, standards* for learning and the incorporation of diverse learning agendas and accomplishments (Gagnon, 1995; McLaughlin, 1995; Oregon Department of Education Performance Standards, 1996; United States Department of Education, Special Education Programs, 1996). Does "standard" mean standardization in the sense of every student accomplishing exactly the same thing to the same picture of mastery, performance or other measurement? If so, how can any standard accommodate all students – especially students with disabilities? If the call for higher national standards means that children really excel – push themselves to do, know, understand just a little more than they thought they could – then how can we compare the achievement of high standards from one student to the next? Never mind, from one school, one district, one state to the next.

Our work with schools suggests that the entire standards discussion is confusing the requirements of program evaluation – *i.e. how well are our schools helping students* ***collectively*** *achieve our articulated standards of learning accomplishment?* – with teacher, student, and parent needs for individual student evaluation – *how is Sarah* *accomplishing our articulated standards of learning accomplishment? And how does that make sense for her?* Within any group of students, learning accomplishment for some proportion of the group will not necessarily look or be exactly the same as for others in the group. In fact, it would be very surprising if there weren't several different patterns of accomplishment in any group of students.

Finding a way to legitimate that some students in any group can accomplish a "standard" in different ways is at the heart of the standards dilemma. If "accomplishment" can mean different things for different students – certainly a logical outcome of the individually tailored curriculum and teaching practices being encouraged – then the various student accomplishments are difficult to "add up" in any straightforward way. Yet adding up accomplishments against a single defined standard is the essential requirement of program assessment. If everyone is achieving the standards in different ways, how can we know how well our schools are doing collectively?

This dilemma is possible to resolve if the requirements of program assessment are separated from the requirements of student assessment. Interestingly, parents interviewed and surveyed across one district and several other schools in our projects have indicated that the most informative ways for them to learn about their child's learning is through parent-teacher conferences, personal contact with teachers and other school personnel and seeing their children use their learning in their day-to-day lives. Reports, grades, and testing follow, in order of importance and usefulness. Others (e.g. Shepard & Bliem, 1995) investigating parents' preferences for information are also finding that traditional measures are viewed as less informative than some of the emerging performance-based assessments that focus more on individual student growth than on acquisition of some standard.

It seems that every student and parent should receive feedback about how well the student is learning, how much growth she has accomplished during some period of time, and how his or her accomplishments compare to the national or community standard established for our students as a group. However, discretion must be possible in letting any individual student know how he or she is compared to others. There is no safety in numbers when your own achievement is compared. Teachers and parents should have the discretion to filter the comparative message for individual students in ways that encourage and enable interest and effort rather than discourage and disable it. Without interest and effort, learning is shallowly compulsory and soon divorced from use and pursuit.

Students' various accomplishments can be summarized in individually anonymous ways to answer the question of how any particular school is achieving whatever the relevant agreed-upon standard for the students is collectively. In this way, the needs of program assessment and comparison can be met, while leaving the revelations of any particular student's accomplishment in the hands of teachers and parents – surely the best suited to decide. Those students within any group who do not achieve to some collective benchmark might have very good reasons for not doing so. At the same time, they might still achieve the more general standard of excellent achievement in a particular area of focus, whether a common curriculum goal, an essential skill, or a learning outcome that emphasizes integration and use of learning in novel ways and situations. The interpretation of the meaning of accomplishment for individual students should rest with those closest to the student's learning. An accomplishment rate of 60-80% for any group of students on any collective benchmark would likely tell a school that they are teaching everyone well, and that 20-40% of their students are accomplishing the benchmark in unique ways (Reynolds, Zetlin & Wang, 1993). As in all good program assessment, the appropriateness of the collective data is best judged and used by those closest to the operation of the program. It is the teachers, staff and families that can best determine how the range of results reflects the students with whom they work or whether the collective results should encourage revision of curriculum and teaching practices.

Like changes in curriculum, this shift in focus on student learning and accomplishments will also require restructured teacher planning, new assessment strategies, and less reliance on proscribed curricula. But achieving such changes requires working in two additional arenas.

From Individual to Group Practice

Our current system has created teachers with different knowledge and information that is differently legitimated. General educators sometimes **know** some important things about the learners with disabilities integrated into their classrooms, but their status as "general" educators makes that knowledge automatically suspect and illegitimate in the face of the "official" knowledge possessed by special educators whose labels match the students'. Even though general educators often spend more time observing and interacting with labeled students integrated in their classrooms, their presumed proper role and responsibility is to accept and implement the special educator's expertise as the system's approved specialist in teaching and learning for students with labels. As Seymour Sarason (1990) sees the situation,

> School personnel are graduates of our colleges and universities. It is there that they learn there are at least two types of human beings, and if you choose to work with one of them you render yourself legally and conceptually incompetent to work with others (p. 258).

Our research demonstrates that these assumptions do not hold up in practice, but more importantly, they can easily get in the way of effective learning for students with disabilities (Ferguson, 1996b; Ferguson & Meyer, 1996; Ferguson & Ferguson, 1992; Ferguson, Ralph, Katul & Cameron, in press). The nearly hundred year history of sorting and separating both students and teachers has resulted in very little common ground. General and special educators know a few of the same things about schools, teaching, and learning, but most of the knowledge and skills they rely upon to fulfill their professional responsibilities seem so unique – even mysterious – that sometimes they must feel as if they are barely in the same profession. Legitimating one teacher's knowledge over another's is an artifact of our history that is just as insupportable as creating the separations in the first place. It seems clear that rethinking our approach to inclusion as but one dimension of a broader general education restructuring must have as one of its goals to increase the common ground of knowledge and skills between general and special educators.

Having said that, let me hasten to add that I am not arguing for **all** educators to become "generalists" or "Super Teachers" who are presumed to possess **all** the skills and information needed to serve the learning of **all** students. I think it very unlikely that anyone could possibly achieve such mastery and competence. Rather, instead of assigning only one teacher to a classroom of 20 or more learners, or to a content area with instructional responsibility for 150-250 students, groups of teachers should be collectively responsible for groups of diverse learners. Only through group practice will educators be able to combine their talents and information and work together to meet the demands of student diversity in ways that retain the benefits and overcome the limits of past practice.

These groups of teachers can bring to the task both a common store of knowledge and skills, but also different areas of specialty. In order to achieve a shift from individual to group teaching practice, we must build upon the current collaboration initiatives among educational professionals in two ways. If collaboration means anything at all, surely it means that two or more people create an outcome for a student that no one of them could have created alone. Group practice creates just such an ongoing, dynamic context, helping educators with varying abilities to contribute to the kind of synergy necessary for effective collaboration.

Replace Restrictive Assignments With Shared Assignments.

Current teacher licensure practices tend to be restrictive, limiting the educator to only teaching students in specific categories. Of course, some of these categories are broader than others, ranging from specific disabilities ("LD" or "MR" certifications for learning disabilities and mental retardation respectively) to "levels" of students ("mild", "severe") to disability types and particular ages (secondary severe, or elementary LD). One key feature of mixed-ability group teaching practice is that teachers share working with all children and youth as part of a team, regardless of their formal preparation or the labels on their certification. This step seems critical because it is one of the most efficient ways for teachers more narrowly educated to "cross-pollinate", quickly increasing the size of their common ground. More importantly, shared assignments create the contexts in which genuine collaboration can occur.

We have encountered a number of schools pursuing group practice through shared assignments. A common first step among special educators is to assign various special education support staff within a building – resource room teacher, speech/language specialist, Title 1 teacher, self-contained classroom teacher – to a smaller number of general education classrooms where they can be responsible for students with all the labels they had each separately served across a much larger number of classrooms. While the previous resource room teacher may feel unprepared to assist the student with significant multiple disabilities, learning how to gather that information from colleagues with different specialties is a "step on the way" to more complete group practice with general educators.

Other schools we know are beginning to create group practice work groups that include some number of general educators as well as one or more special educators and other certified or classified support staff. Last year one of the SLSD elementary schools reorganized into three smaller "vertical" communities. Each includes classroom teachers from kindergarten to grade 5 as well as a special educator and a number of classroom assistants previously assigned either to special education or Title 1. These new groups are beginning to construct working relationships that will support their various efforts to change their teaching practices, improve literacy, experiment with multiple intelligences theory, and develop better student assessment systems for what they actually teach. In the midst of these changes there are already new roles for the special education members of the workgroups.

Two of the workgroups are designing curriculum together. Since they were part of the discussion from the beginning, the special educators are helping to tailor the development of learning objectives, activities, and assessment tools to better incorporate the unique learning of labeled students. Being part of the design of general education curriculum from the beginning means that special educators no longer have to try to "fit" labeled students into a completed plan. It also creates opportunities for special educators to teach more aspects of the plan to all the students instead of being relegated as "helpers" for those that might be having trouble or need extra help or support. In one of the workgroups the commitment to **group** practice has allowed them to group all the students into smaller literacy groups. Each of the members of the team takes responsibility for several student groups, regardless of the official title or certification. Each member also contributes support in his or her own areas of knowledge and interest to others so that students in all the groups experience the best teaching of the collective team.

Other buildings are reorganizing around grade-level or block teams, in which groups meet regularly to share curriculum planning, allocate resources, schedule activities, share teaching tasks (e.g. rotating the class through each of the three or four teachers when doing a unit, each teacher focusing on material according to his/her strengths and interests), and to problem solve issues on behalf of the now "mutually owned" students. In some international schools, teams stay with their students for as many as 10 years to achieve maximum benefits of long-term relationships among teachers, students and families. The schools here are moving toward a 2-5 year commitment with the same group of students.

In both elementary and secondary schools we are also documenting the results of co-teaching efforts. One middle school in particular has relied upon this strategy to both share knowledge across general and special educators and to deliver services and supports to very diverse groups of students in block classes. Sometimes these dyadic collaborations have worked. Cross-pollinating their knowledge and skills, teacher pairs have become educators who benefit both from a shared knowledge base and an appreciation for, and ability to access, others' specialty knowledge. In other situations the team teachers have not achieved a shared working relationship, but instead recapitulated the history of parallel work relations between general and special educators. Each takes on tasks and responsibilities, balanced, but clearly different and differentiated.

Personnel preparation programs are reflecting a transition to group practice as well. More gradually, but increasingly, initial preparation programs are merging foundational general and special education content and licensure outcomes. Some states are simultaneously shifting from restrictive, "stand alone" licensure categories to a greater emphasis on the use of "add on" endorsements to initial, usually broader licenses. Innovative continuing professional development opportunities also encourage general and special educators to study collaboratively with pre-service students (e.g., Baumgart & Ferguson, 1991; Ferguson et al., 1994a; Goodlad, 1990). In this way the directions of ongoing professional development can be determined by the needs of a particular group or school to "round out" or increase some area of capacity, say in designing behavioral and emotional supports or extending their use of technology.

From "Delivering Service" to "Providing Learner Supports"

The first two shifts together produce a more fundamental movement from structuring education according to a service metaphor to structuring it using a support metaphor. As teachers alter their definitions of learning to not just accommodate, but legitimate, different amounts and types of learning for different students, their relationships with students will necessarily become more reciprocal and shared. Students and their families will become participants in the curriculum and teaching enterprise, as well as the definitions and evidences of learning achievement.

Our traditional, ability-based, norm-driven, categorical approaches use differences in students as sorting categories to identify the matching curriculum and teaching service that their particular constellation of abilities and disabilities might require. The standard curriculum, for example, was the "service" deemed appropriate to the majority of students – certainly those within the standard range of the norm. If students fell outside that standard range, the curriculum had to be "adapted" or "modified" so that the student's learning either approximated or exceeded the learning achieved by most. As student diversity has increased in our schools, the proportion of students for whom the service of schooling must be adapted or modified has burgeoned. As a result, teachers seem quite clear that the "norm", if it every really existed in the untidy worlds of schools, has nearly disappeared as a useful construct for the design of learning and management of classrooms (Pugach & Seidl, 1995; Putnam, Speigel, & Bruininks, 1995).

The dimension of disability seems only a small addition to this mix. However, the historical baggage that disability brings to the diversity already present in general education classrooms risks transforming diversity into a deficit rather than becoming just another diversity unless the underlying norm-based assumptions are also transformed (Pugach & Seidl, 1996). Unlike the concept of diversity, the disability relies upon the concept of norm. People with disabilities "deviate" from this single standard. The historical response has been to frame the appropriate educational response as one that either overcomes, or at least attenuates, the power of that deviation.

Diversity, by contrast, challenges the very notion that there is one way to educate or one norm to be sought. Instead, there are different patterns of achievement and social contribution that fit the various cultural, racial, and gender differences children and youth bring to schooling. Class is a difference that illustrates what can happen when the norm-laden difference of disability is added to the norm-challenging differences of culture and gender. Too often the differences of class are viewed in our schools as deficits that impede learning. To be sure, poverty can impede learning when a child has too little food, inadequate housing, too little rest, and minimal nurtering. Indeed, the intersection of disability and class has been long established and continues to be evident in the disproportionate number of children of low socioeconomic and minority students assigned to special education. As a consequence, the life-patterns and values of families within some socioeconomic classes – the very same kinds of differences we seek to accommodate and respect for people of other races and cultures – are viewed as in need of remediation rather than respect.

What may help to resolve these contradictions, and to avoid the risk that linking disability and diversity will turn diversity into a deficit, is a new metaphor. I think the metaphor of support offers a promising alternative. According to the American Heritage dictionary, support means, "to hold in position", "to prevent from falling, sinking, or slipping", "to bear the weight of, especially from below", and to "lend strength to". The imagery to me offers not only an appropriate alternative to the norm-based, sorting metaphor of service upon which schooling has long relied; it also offers a way to think about diversity as an opportunity for personalizing growth and participation. Any individual's differences are simply lenses through which to see what is required to "hold in position" and "to prevent from falling, sinking, or slipping".

Within the context of schools, the core relations between teachers and students, the definitions of learning that dominate, and the shared responsibility among educators for achieving student learning all begin with identifying what any student needs to be "held in position" for learning. It supports a shift from viewing any difference or disability in terms of individual limitation to a focus on environmental and social constraints. Support is also grounded in the perspective of the person receiving it, not the person providing it. Thus, all student differences must define the specific opportunities and practices teachers use to support their learning. Various kinds of intensive instruction, physical supports, and accommodations typically viewed as necessary only for some students become opportunities for all students to personalize their learning in ways that mesh with who they are and what they are pursuing as members of their communities.

Next Steps

Our studies have certainly not resolved the issues I defined above. We have begun to learn how special education can become an integral part of public schooling. Undoing decades of separation is certainly not an easy task. In many schools, however, the parts of special education that are robust and generalizable enough to survive in a changing general education are contributing to those changes in ways that promise better learning and schooling outcomes for all kinds of students.

Our own efforts to become collaborators with schools is teaching us some of the ways that higher education, and educational research can change. Collaborative research and joint efforts to design and deliver continuing professional development are only two ways such alliances might be forged. The outcomes for schools seem to be promising. The effect on higher education and educational research is less clear, but will likely challenge analogous efforts at fundamental restructuring.

We are only beginning to tap the resources of families and communities. Long distanced from schools by professionalism and pragmatics, schools' linkages with the people of the community have been weak. Just bringing family members perspectives into the conversation as we have begun to do with some schools and district is a start.

Achieving satisfying and enduring change in schooling is neither simple nor quick. Such fundamental changes are arduous, painful and slow in part because the task is large and complex (Fullan & Miles, 1992; Sizer, 1992). The dynamics require engagement in a sociopolitical process that requires people at all levels (individual, classroom, school, district, community, state, and nation) to engage in the "phenomenology of change". We must learn not only how to change our core educational practices, but to do so with an understanding of how those changes are *experienced* by students, educators, and community members (Barth, 1990; Fullen & Miles, 1992; Noddings, 1993). I offer the three issues and three arenas of action presented here as a reasonable framework for pursuing this complex task. Although it has emerged from my understanding of our work, as well as the work of many others, I believe it will continue to guide my efforts to understand and support the changes needed in our schools as we approach a new century. While the task is certainly enormous, it is also necessary.

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